CITY HILIGHTS

The Truth Speaks

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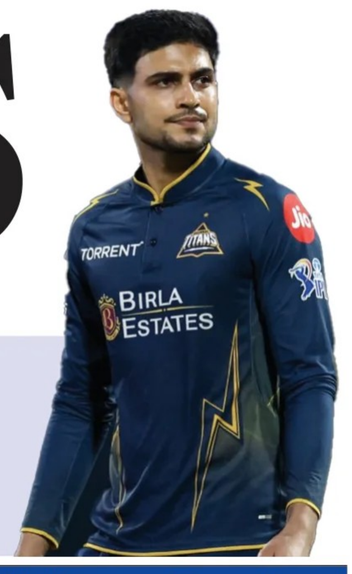

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FOES BACK ON PAK TRUCE TABLE?

Trump touts 'strong position' for Islamabad talks; Vance-led team heads to Pakistan; Iran says by imposing a blockade and violating the truce, Trump seeks to justify renewed warmongering

We're going to end up with a great deal. But if talks don't go well as tomorrow's ceasefire deadline looms, we'll resume bombing.
—Donald Trump, US President

WASHINGTON

Donald Trump declared on Tuesday that the US holds a "very, very strong" position as it prepares for a high-stakes second round of talks with Iran in Pakistan.

However, the US president's optimistic rhetoric was tempered by a stark warning: if a deal is not reached before the current 14-day ceasefire expires on Wednesday (Apr 22), "lots of bombs" will begin to fall.

The President signalled that while he is dispatching a heavyweight delegation to Islamabad led by US Vice President JD Vance, Jared Kushner, and Special Envoy Steve Witkoff, his patience for diplomacy is wearing thin.

"We're going to end up with a great deal. I think they have no choice," Trump said, referring to the economic pressure exerted by the ongoing USnaval blockade. He explicitly ruled out a long-term extension of the current truce, stating, "I don't want to do that. We don't have that much time."

Pak the central mediator

Pakistan remains the "central mediator" in this conflict, which has paralysed global energy markets following the closure of the Strait of Hormuz. While the US team is reportedly already en route to the Pakistani capital, the Iranian side has sent mixed signals.

Ceasefire deadline looms

As the midnight deadline for the ceasefire approaches, the world's eyes are on the Serena Hotel in Islamabad. Despite the initial ceasefire, Israel continued to bombard Lebanon, which was mentioned as part of the document shared by Pakistan. Tehran's stance was clear: a ceasefire would mean no strikes in Lebanon. Though the first round of talks in Pakistan was unsuccessful, what happens in the second round remains to be seen.

WHAT IF PEACE TALK FAILS...

US: Bombs will go off Iran: Ready with new cards

WASHINGTON

Uncertainty clouded prospects of the second round of peace talks between Iran and the United States, planned to take place this week in Pakistan, remains uncertain after officials in Tehran threatened not to attend after the US seized an Iranian-flagged vessel near the Strait of Hormuz over the weekend.

The two-week ceasefire between Tehran and Washington is set to expire on Wednesday, with US President Donald Trump saying it's highly unlikely that it will be extended.

Vice President JD Vance was expected to leave for Pakistan on Tuesday, just over a week after a round of talks there with Iran's lead negotiator, Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf, ended without a deal.

Meanwhile, Iran said that by imposing a blockade and violating the ceasefire, Trump seeks to turn the negotiating table into a table of surrender or to justify renewed warmongering.

"We do not accept negotiations under the shadow of threats, and in the past two weeks, we have prepared to reveal new cards on the battlefield," Iran's powerful parliament speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf, who is Iran's top negotiator in talks with the United States, wrote in a post on X.

He also threatened that Tehran had "new cards" if war resumes with the United States and Israel.

Hormuz continues to choke

While both the US and Iran have expressed hope of negotiating an end to the war, they have continued to escalate a standoff in and around the Hormuz Strait, the critical water passage that has emerged as a central issue in peace talks. Shipping traffic through the Hormuz remained broadly halted on Tuesday with only three ships passing the waterway in the past 24 hours, as per shipping data. A US blockade of Iranian ports has infuriated Tehran, prompting it to maintain its own restrictions on the strait, which had been typically handling roughly one-fifth of the world's oil and liquefied natural gas supply.

We do not accept negotiations under the shadow of threats, and in the last two weeks we have been preparing to show new cards on the battlefield.
—Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf, Iran parliament speaker

IN-SHORT

- Iran tanker 'Silly City' slips past US Strait of Hormuz blockade.
- Chemicals for missiles from China on US seized Iran ship? claims Nikki Haley, Indian-origin member of US President's Republican Party.
- China's President Xi Jinping urges Hormuz reopening in rare call with Saudi De Facto ruler.
- Iran's 'Pride and Prejudice'-coded message to Trump on peace talks.
- Trump says currency swap with UAE is under consideration with an aiim to help the nation.

'Mossad operative behind 'Op Roaring Lion' killed on mission'

JERUSALEM: A Mossad operative who paved the way for Israel's "Operation Roaring Lion" was killed during operations outside the country, the agency's director, David Barnea, said. Although he did not clarify who the person was, when they were killed or during which incident, following protocol for active intelligence personnel, he identified them as 'M.'.

During a Remembrance Day ceremony for Mossad's fallen, Barnea stated that the missions led by M. significantly influenced the campaign against Iran by combining "creativity, cunning, and advanced technology". "During 'Operation Roaring Lion,' my thoughts and heart were filled with pride in the character and actions of M.," he said.

Woman ties up boyfriend, sets him afire, watches him die

BENGALURU

In a chilling case that has shocked the city, a 27-year-old woman allegedly tied up her boyfriend under the pretext of a "western-style proposal" and set him on fire using kerosene, killing him in what police have described as a premeditated murder.

The incident came to light in the Byadarahalli police station limits, where investigators say the accused had carefully planned the killing after suspecting that her boyfriend was distancing himself from her. The victim, Kiran, had reportedly visited the woman, Prema, at her residence after she called him over, informing him that no one else was at home.

The couple had been in a relationship and worked together at a mobile store near Rajajinagar. Investigators suspect strained relationship may have pushed the woman to plan the fatal act.

14 killed in firecracker unit blast in Thrissur ahead of Pooram

THRISSUR

At least 13 workers were killed and five others sustained severe burn injuries after a powerful explosion ripped through a firecracker manufacturing unit linked to the Thiruvambady temple at Mundathikode in Keralam's Thrissur, where preparations were underway for the Thrissur Pooram.

As per officials, close to 70 labourers—most of them from Kundannur—were present at the facility when the blast occurred.The impact was so powerful that many nearby residents initially mistook it for an earthquake, as thick plumes of smoke engulfed the area. Sources said large quantities of explosive material, estimated to be around 2,000 kg, were stored at the unit.

At least 10 people were admitted to the Government Medical College Hospital Thrissur at Mulankunnathukavu. Hospital sources said a few of the injured are in critical condition.

The incident took place at a fireworks shed owned by Mundathikode Satheesh, the licensed manufacturer responsible for supplying fireworks to the Thiruvambadi Devaswom Board. Satheesh, who was also in charge of operations at the site, is among those seriously injured and has been admitted to Thrissur Medical College Hospital.

The incident took place at a fireworks shed owned by Satheesan from Mundathicode, the licensed manufacturer responsible for supplying fireworks to the Thiruvambadi Devaswom Board. He sustained burn injuries but survived and is currently undergoing treatment. Among those killed are three coordinators from Kottappuram in Thrissur town, who were assisting the licensee in the final stages of firecracker preparation.

District Collector Shikha Surendran assigned the Sub-Divisional Magistrate and Thrissur RDO to probe into the incident.

Eyewitnesses reported that two large explosions were heard initially, followed by a series of continuing blasts as firecrackers stored at the site kept detonating. Locals said the sound of the explosions could be heard several kilometres away.

Compromise inevitable for CM in politics: Jarkiholi

BENGALURU

Observing Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's silence over action initiated against a couple of minority leaders — MLC Abdul Jabbar was suspended from the party and MLC Naseer Ahmed sacked as CM's political secretary — Minister Satish Jarkiholi on Tuesday said: "At certain point of time, compromise becomes inevitable in politics." Speaking in Mysuru, Jarkiholi said one "can't go strict at all times." He added, "CM Siddaramaiah is as strict as ever."

Wonder if someone did black magic on Siddaramaiah: Rajanna

Senior Congress lawmaker K N Rajanna on Tuesday claimed 'black magic' may have left Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah politically helpless. He said this while building on his earlier statement lamenting Siddaramaiah's "helplessness" and not standing up for his party loyalists who have faced action.

GP faces FIR over ₹500 betting remark

TUMAKURU : A court has directed a probe and ordered the registration of an FIR against Home Minister G Parameshwara regarding his public statement about placing a Rs 500 bet during a kabaddi tournament in Tumakuru. During a state-level kabaddi tournament in October 2025, the HM admitted to the media that he lost a Rs 500 bet to District Collector Shubha Kalyan. Following this, a private complaint was filed by HR Nagabhushan, who argued that as the home minister's public admission of gambling—an illegal act—required legal action.

Tim Cook steps down as Apple CEO after 15-year run

CALIFORNIA

After spending 15 years at the helm of one of the world' most renowned companies, Apple CEO Tim Cook is stepping down and passing over the baton to John Ternus.

This change will take effect from September 1 2026. John Ternus, currently Apple's senior vice president of hardware engineering, will take over as chief executive.

Back in 2011, when Cook was appointed the CEO, he was faced with herculean task of making sure the company retains its hard-fought standing it had achieved under the visionary leadership of founder and CEO Steve Jobs.

A MODEL TO THE WORLD

India holds fuel prices steady despite global crude surge

NEW DELHI

Even after the escalation in the West Asia conflict and rise in Brent crude oil prices due to the closure of the Strait of Hormuz, the fuel prices remain unchanged in India, while many countries have witnessed a jump of up to 85%.

Data by Kotak highlighted a sharp divergence between India and both advanced and emerging countries, where consumers have faced increases in fuel prices so far this year. On the diesel front, prices have witnessed a sharp rise in several countries in recent months amid geopolitical tensions.

Country-wise, the UAE saw an increase of around 85%, followed by Australia and the United States, which recorded rises of more than 65% and 62%, respectively. Meanwhile, in Canada, Pakistan, France, Sri Lanka and Britain, prices rose between 35% and 53%.

Moreover, countries where prices increased more modestly include China and Brazil, while Russia stands out as an exception, with diesel prices rising only slightly — by over 1%.

In contrast, diesel prices in India have remained unchanged at Rs 87.6 per litre compared to January levels, indicating zero increase despite the US-Iran tensions.

A similar trend has been observed in petrol prices. Neighbouring Pakistan has seen the highest, a 44% jump in petrol prices, followed by the United States (42%) and the UAE (36%).

Meanwhile, petrol prices in Canada, Sri Lanka and China have risen by up to 34%, while Australia, Britain and France recorded relatively moderate gains.

Among countries with modest increases, Brazil and Russia reported hikes of over 7% and 1%, respectively.

In India, retail petrol prices have been kept at Rs 94.7 per litre compared to January levels, indicating no increase for consumers.

India's unchanged fuel prices highlight the degree of price stabilisation enabled by policy interventions and public-sector oil marketing company (OMC) pricing. Despite volatility in global fuel markets, Indian consumers have largely been shielded from the immediate pass-through of international price pressures.

India's pricing strategy

Frozen retail rates — Major state-run refiners have kept retail prices unchanged, with Delhi diesel steady at ₹87.67 and Mumbai at ₹90.03 per litre as of late April

GOVT ACTION — The government has engaged in a cushioning strategy, including a "big" excise duty cut on petrol/diesel and introducing new export duties on diesel and ATF to manage the price impact.

DIESEL PRICE HIKE

UAE	85%
Australia	65%
United States	62%
Canada, Pakistan, France, Sri Lanka, Britain	35% -53%
Russia	1%
India	0%

PETROL PRICE HIKE

Pakistan	44%
United States	42%
UAE	36%
Canada, Sri Lanka and China	34%
Brazil	7%
Russia	1%
India	0%

Cops foil farmers' attempt to lay siege to DC's office in Mysuru

MYSURU

Hundreds of farmers staged a protest in front of the Deputy Commissioner's office alleging that the additional ₹100 per tonne announced by the state government has not been paid to sugarcane growers in Mysuru on Tuesday.

When the protesters attempted to enter the office premises, police intervened, leading to brief pushing and jostling between the two sides. The farmers later sat in the portico and continued their protest.

Lead Bank Manager Krishnamurthy visited the protest site and informed farmers that banks should not insist on CIBIL scores for gold loans. He clarified that a fee of ₹150–₹200 can be charged for gold testing, and any excess

charges can be reported.

District Manager of Cauvery Grameena Bank, Pramod Noni, stated that a state-level meeting of executive officials will be held in Mysuru on May 8 to address issues related to One-Time Settlement (OTS) loan repayments.

Addressing concerns about electricity problems in the district, an Executive Engineer assured that a meeting with farmer leaders would be convened soon to resolve the issues.

State President of the Sugarcane Growers Association, Kurubur Shanthakumar, accused Bannari Sugar Factory of continuously exploiting farmers and ignoring government orders. He alleged that despite having a crushing capacity of 15 lakh tonnes, the factory procured only about 7.5 lakh tonnes of sugarcane this year. He further claimed that ₹7.5 crore in additional payments due to farmers has not been disbursed.

Demanding strict action, he urged the district administration to seize the sugar stock, sell it, and ensure payment to farmers. He also called for the arrest of the factory owners for repeatedly violating government directives.

The farmers welcomed the central government's decision to blend 20% ethanol with petrol, calling it a positive step.

The protesting farmers have vowed to continue their indefinite agitation until their dues are cleared. Over 250 farmers, including several leaders, participated in the protest.

CLARITY OF PURPOSE ESSENTIAL FOR YOUTH

Free Coaching a Valuable Opportunity: DCP Patil

MYSURU

Youth must have a clear understanding of life goals, said Mysuru City Armed Reserve DCP Siddanagouda Y. Patil.

He observed that the present education system has become highly commercialized, with institutions charging huge fees for coaching, while quality guidance is being offered free at "Jnanabutti." Students to make the best use of such opportunities to secure a good position in society.

He was speaking at the valedictory function organized by Jnanabutti Free Coaching Centre at the Government High School and PU College premises in Lakshmipuram, where a study book for PC and PSI competitive exams was released.

Referring to successful candidates in UPSC and KPSC exams, the DCP noted that many came from underprivileged backgrounds and advised students to learn subjects objectively. While information is widely available on the internet, structured coaching provides better guidance. There is a need for continuous study, setting high career goals, and maintaining integrity in any position held. "Achievement is not the final destination but a continuous journey. Whatever profession

you choose—police, doctor, or writer—humanity must come first".

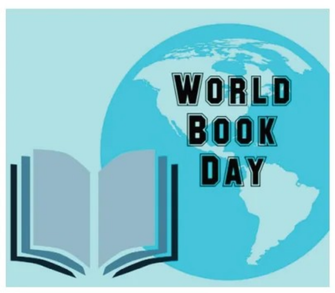
Karnataka Police Academy Assistant Director S.N. Sandesh Kumar stressed determination, time management, and consistent practice are crucial for competitive exams. He complimented Jnanabutti for guiding youth who are uncertain about their future after graduation and instilling competitive thinking. The challenges make individuals stronger, and those who succeed through hardship develop greater mental resilience. Students should not be distracted by personal or financial problems but stay focused on their studies. Encouragement, he said, is key to overcoming obstacles.

Highlighting that candidates from North Karnataka are often more successful in government jobs, he urged youth from South Karnataka to reflect on this trend. He also explained changes in examination patterns over the years and stressed the importance of continuous practice, hard work, and reading NCERT textbooks to build a strong foundation.

Retired Deputy Superintendent of Police J.B. Rangaswamy said that no background is required to secure a government job—talent itself is the true background. He encouraged youth to reject misconceptions about bribery and instead prepare with determination, knowledge, and strong character.

Thinker Prof. M. Krishnegowda advised students to develop precision and clarity in their efforts, begin preparation during their degree studies, and thoroughly understand exam patterns for success.

Jainahalli Satyanarayana and others were present.



World Book Day in Mysuru on April 23

MYSURU

The Department of Public Libraries, Mysuru City Central Library, in association with Balya Foundation, will organize World Book and Copyright Day along with International Women's Day celebrations on April 23 at 12:30 PM at People's Park, City Central Library premises in Mysuru.

The program will feature the launch of a campaign promoting the reuse of unused notebook pages, felicitation of individuals who secured government jobs by utilizing library resources, and recognition of staff who have rendered exemplary service in libraries on an honorarium basis.

The event will be presided over by Ramesh Narasayya, retired Deputy Commissioner of the Commercial Taxes Department and member of the City Library Authority. The program will be inaugurated by Nithin Patil, Regional Commissioner/Administrator of Mysuru City Corporation.

Chief guests include Anil K.S, Founder of Balya Foundation, and Uma Anil, Co-founder of the foundation.

Dignitaries to be present are Dr. P. Ramasheesh, retired librarian of the University of Mysore; Dr. V. Shanmugam, Principal of Maharaja College; Krishna, Block Education Officer of the South Zone; Mubeen Seth, President of Rotary Children's Association; Dr. Nagaraju, NCERT member and librarian; and Dr. B. Mallikarjuna Swamy, Vice Principal of Government Student Hostel High School and member of People's Park.

Health camp

As part of the World Book Day celebrations, a general health check-up camp will be conducted by Mysuru Manipal Multi-Speciality Hospital, along with a free eye check-up camp by Dr. Agarwal's Eye Hospital, on April 23 at 10:00 AM at People's Park Library.

On this occasion, individuals who benefitted from library services and secured government jobs, as well as dedicated library staff, will be honored by officials and guests.

In addition, the campaign to reuse unused notebook pages will be formally launched, and book exhibitions will be organized across all branch and service libraries.

The libraries will remain open from 8:00 AM to 11:30 AM and 4:00 PM to 8:00 PM on the day, said B. Manjunath, Deputy Director of the City Central Library.

Don't use 'Jai Shri Ram' slogan for politics: MLA Harishgowda

MYSURU

Chamaraja Assembly Constituency MLA K Harish Gowda said the slogan, 'Jai Shree Ram' should not be used for politics."

Speaking at the inauguration ceremony of the renovated Sathya Pramoda Kalyana Mantapa near the Anjaneyaswamy Temple opposite the railway ground on KRS Road here, he said Jai Shri Ram has been chanted since the time of our ancestors. It is now being used politically and in various other ways, which should not happen. Lord Shri Ram belongs equally to everyone. "Wherever you go, there will be a Sri Rama temple in every village. Our ancestors built a Rama temple in K.G. Koppal. We will remember Lord Shri Ram as long as the sun and moon exist. I too have immense devotion to God," he

said.

The MLA said from young age, they have been taught about various deities like Rama, Krishna, and Shiva and they are also raising our children by teaching them the same. In the culture of Bharat, people believe in God. He too believes in spirituality as they are nothing without God. All support will be given to any work taken by Uttaradi Mutt for the welfare of the world.

The Kalyana Mantapa was built and inaugurated by Satyadhyana Acharya. Uttaradi Matha's Vidyadhisha Acharya Guttal, Adya Govinda Acharya, Diwan Shashidhara Acharya, Administrative Officer Ananda Teertha Acharya Chimmalagi, Joint Administrative Officer Panduranga Acharya Rotti, former MDA Chairman H.V. Rajeev, N.M. Naveen Kumar, former city corporation members Prameela Bharat, Jagannath Shenoy, Mahesh Kamath, Vasudevamurthy, Vikram Iyengar, Pramod Acharya, Ajay Shastri, and others were present.

Basava Jayanti celebrated at MYMUL

MYSURU

Basava Jayanti was celebrated at Mysuru District Milk Producers' Cooperative Unions Federation (MYMUL) at Alanahalli in Mysuru on Monday.

MYMUL President K. Eregowda, who offered floral tributes to the portrait of Basavanna, said Basavanna, the 12th-century world teacher, was unparalleled, as he was as an embodiment of Lord Shiva. In the 12th century, Basavanna worked to eliminate social hierarchies and the notion of superiority and inferiority. He advocated the wearing of the Ishtalinga for people of all communities, irrespective of caste or occupation.

Eregowda said all employees working in the federation should view their work as a form of devotion, seeing Basavanna through their dedication and sincerity. Basavanna had envisioned equality and social reform during his time and had established the Anubhava Mantapa, which functioned like a modern-day parliament, where responsibilities were shared among all participants.

MYMUL Director Om Prakash said that employees from various communities are working together to build and strengthen the federation. Despite Basavanna's fight against caste discrimination centuries ago, such divisions still persist today. Basavanna's vachanas remain relevant and continue to convey meaningful messages even today.

Another Director, B.N. Sadananda, said that through the Vachana movement, Basavanna advocated equality, a just society, and equal opportunities for women. In the 12th century, Basavanna had given significant importance to women's status. He stressed the need for introspection on whether society is truly following Basavanna's ideals. Despite advancements such as reaching Mars, he said, society has not yet shed caste-based prejudices. He emphasized that true progress is possible only when caste divisions are eliminated.

He added that social reformers like Ambedkar and Kanakadasa focused on building an egalitarian society, believing that true development would follow naturally. He urged people to uphold Basavanna's ideals in the future as a mark of respect to his legacy.

Managing Director K.N. Suresh Naik, along with managers, deputy managers, office-bearers of the employees' union, and staff members were present.

Seer released "Ambe Vasavambe" devotional song

MYSURU

The devotional song "Ambe Vasavambe", produced by Sri Mayakara Music and Sri Mayakara Productions, was officially released at the Vasavi Peetha in Bengaluru.

The song has been conceptualized and produced by astrologer Mooguru Madhudikshit. Lyrics and music composition were handled by Vinay Shankar, while singer Manojavam Atreya rendered the song with deep devotion. Direction was done by K. Akash, and the video has been beautifully brought to life by Sinicut Productions.

At the event, Vasavi Peetha head Sri Sachchidananda Saraswati Swamiji and Karnataka State Arya Vaishya Mahasabha President R.P. Ravishankar released the song's poster and video.

Among those present were South Vasavi Trust Mysuru President Nagaraju Gupta, Gupta Offset Printers owner Ramanath Gupta, Bengaluru Chiru Properties' Raghavendra, Mahasabha Director Shabarish, Akshaya Developers' Umesh, Revathi Printers' Ramachandra, and singer Ajjappa, among others.

The song "Ambe Vasavambe" is available on the Sri Mayakara Music YouTube channel, and devotees are requested to watch and share their feedback, as stated in the release.

Doctors' Music group celebrates 5th anniversary

MYSURU

The doctors' musical troupe Gaana Vaidyaloka organized its 5th anniversary event titled "Endoo Mareyada Haadu–14" (Unforgettable Songs–14) at Ramagovinda Rangamandira in Ramakrishnanagar, Mysuru.

Presiding over the event, President of the Gaana Vaidyaloka organization, Dr. Y.D. Rajanna, said that all members of the group are doctors who are constantly engaged in emergency services. Bringing them together for rehearsals itself is a major challenge. Despite this, the organization has successfully completed four years and stepped into its fifth year, conducting 14 programs under the "Endoo Mareyada Haadu" series. Beyond music, the group is also strengthening relationships among its members, he added.

He expressed happiness that the team has demonstrated that dedication to learning is essential in any profession. With support from members of various singing groups, Gaana Vaidyaloka has grown to its present level. Senior journalist Amshi Prasannakumar inaugurated the program. Dr. T. Ravikumar delivered the introductory speech.

Later, Dr. Y.D. Rajanna, Dr. T. Ravikumar, Dr. Shyamaprasad, Dr. Surendran, Dr. Chinnanagappa, Dr. Suma, Dr. Vani, Dr. Manjunath, and C.S. Vani presented musical performances. Lecturer Edayur Sameeulla compered the program.

Government Employees' Cultural and Literary Council formed

MYSURU

The Karnataka State Government Employees' Cultural and Literary Council unveiled its comprehensive vision and objectives aimed at fostering creativity, cultural awareness, and social responsibility among government employees across the State.

Addressing the media, Council representatives stated that the primary goal is to provide a vibrant platform for government employees to showcase their talents in art and literature while relieving them from the pressures of their professional lives. The Council seeks to bring together literary enthusiasts from across Karnataka and revive interest in Kannada literature, thereby enriching the linguistic and cultural heritage of the State.

The Council emphasized its commitment to promoting Kannada language, culture, and pride among employees. It also aims to preserve India's rich history, traditions, and art forms while launching awareness campaigns to strengthen Kannada identity. Environmental responsibility is another key focus, with initiatives encouraging a return to nature and large-scale tree plantation drives. A range of cultural and literary activities

will be organized, including poetry meets, book releases, workshops, and publication of journals compiling writings from employees across districts. Special emphasis will be placed on encouraging women employees to contribute to literature, folk arts, and children's writing.

The Council also plans to revive traditional practices on the verge of extinction and organize educational tours to historically significant sites such as monuments, educational institutions, temples, water bodies, and forts. These initiatives aim to deepen awareness about heritage conservation and the role of employees in preserving it.

Programs under themes like "Know Our Place" and "Let's Learn and Share" will be conducted, combining knowledge-sharing with recreational tours. The Council will also work towards improving service conditions of employees and addressing their concerns through constructive efforts.

To support intellectual growth, the Council plans to establish free reading rooms and libraries, alongside welfare programs for women. Healthcare initiatives will include free medical camps, eye check-ups, blood donation drives, and awareness campaigns on critical diseases. Collaboration with hospitals and diagnostic centers will help provide affordable treatment to the underprivileged. The Council also intends to organize job fairs, women's conventions, patriotic events, artists' conferences, and training workshops. It will collaborate with government bodies, NGOs, and corporate organizations to implement its programs effectively.

WATER WORRIES DEEPEN

KRS and Kabini levels ring alarm bells

SHYAM SUNDAR VATTAM
MYSURU

A file picture of Krishna Raja Sagar Dam.

A looming water crisis is casting a long shadow over Mysuru, Ramanagara, Mandya, and Bengaluru as the lifeline reservoirs continue to shrink at a worrying pace. With summer tightening its grip and rains yet to arrive, the situation is becoming increasingly grim.

At the heart of the concern is the Krishna Raja Sagar Dam (KRS) in Srirangapatna taluk of Mandya district, which today stands at 98.47 feet, significantly below its maximum capacity of 124.80 ft. The numbers paint a stark picture—inflow is just 92 cusecs, while outflow is a massive 4,365 cusecs. This imbalance is rapidly draining the reservoir, raising serious questions about sustainability in the coming weeks. KRS, which serves as the primary drinking water source for lakhs of people across four districts, is now under severe stress.

The situation is no better at the Kabini Dam, another crucial source feeding parts of Mysuru and surrounding taluks. The current level stands at 2259.55 ft, well below its full reservoir level of 2284 ft. With an inflow of just 80 cusecs against an outflow of 1,500 cusecs, the water levels here too are steadily declining. Officials are increasingly concerned as Kabini plays a vital role in supplementing drinking water supply, especially during peak summer.

No April showers yet

Adding to the crisis is the absence of April showers in the catchment areas. The expected pre-monsoon rains, which usually provide some relief, have failed to materialize so far. This has left reservoirs heavily dependent on dwindling reserves.

Situation is precarious, admit officials

"The gap between inflow and outflow is alarming. If this trend continues, we may face severe shortages," a senior irrigation official warned. "KRS has always been our lifeline. Seeing it deplete like this is deeply concerning for millions who depend on it daily," said a local resident from Mandya. "Without timely rains, managing drinking water supply will become increasingly challenging in the coming weeks," another official noted.

A crisis in the making?

With both KRS and Kabini levels dropping and no immediate rainfall in sight, the region stands on the brink of a serious drinking water crunch. Conservation, careful management, and urgent preparedness are now the need of the hour as Karnataka braces for a difficult summer ahead.

Heat tightens its grip across taluks

Mercury soars, humidity swings

SHYAM SUNDAR VATTAM
MYSURU

A wave of intense summer heat has swept across multiple taluks, with temperatures hovering at alarming highs over the past three days. From Heggadadevanakote to T. Narasipura, the mercury has consistently pushed beyond comfort levels, signaling a tough spell for residents.

Heggadadevanakote taluk recorded one of the highest maximum temperatures, peaking at 39.7°C on April 19 and staying close at 38.7°C on April 20. Similarly, Nanjanagud and T. Narasipura witnessed extreme heat, touching 39.3°C and 39.4°C respectively in recent days.

Mysuru city itself remained hot, with temperatures fluctuating between 37.7°C and 38.7°C, reflecting widespread heat stress across urban and rural belts alike.

Hunsur showed a sudden spike, jumping from 32.6°C to 37.7°C, while Periyapatna and Saligram maintained consistently high readings near 37°C+, indicating little respite from the blazing sun.

Little respite

Minimum temperatures have also stayed elevated, making nights uncomfortably warm. Most taluks recorded lows between 22°C and 25°C, with Krishnarajanagar peaking at a high night temperature of 26.3°C. Periyapatna offered slight relief with a dip to 20.9°C, but overall, nights have remained far from cooling.

Humidity causes discomfort

Humidity levels have compounded the heat stress. Hunsur recorded a high 83% humidity, while Mysuru and Nanjanagud hovered around 77–78%, creating sticky and exhausting conditions. Interestingly, T. Narasipura showed a sharp dip to 27% humidity on April 18, highlighting fluctuating moisture levels across the region.

Looking ahead to April 21 and beyond, several taluks are expected to fall under moderate to high heat risk, with some areas edging toward extreme conditions if current trends persist. The combination of high daytime temperatures and rising humidity could significantly impact health, agriculture, and daily life.

Authorities urge residents to stay hydrated, avoid direct sun exposure during peak hours, and take necessary precautions. With the heat tightening its grip, preparedness and awareness are key to beating the rising temperatures.

Shankara Jayanti celebrated at BJP office

MYSURU

The jayanti of Adi Shankaracharya was celebrated with devotion at the Mysuru City BJP office.

Floral tributes were offered to the portrait of Adi Shankaracharya, sweets were distributed, and devotional songs (bhajans) in praise of Shankaracharya were sung.

Vidushi Nagalakshmi spoke about the life, achievements, and works of Adi Shankaracharya. In her speech, she elaborated on Advaita Vedanta, its relevance in the present day, and various aspects including the concept of equality emphasized in it.

MLA T.S. Srivatsa said that the party office regularly celebrates the birth anniversaries of many great personalities, which helps convey their ideals to party workers and fosters values such as equality and fraternity.

City BJP President L. Nagendra, State Convenor of Cells N.V. Phaneesh, Division In-charge Swamy Marulapura, Co-In-charge Dr. E.C. Ningaraj Gowda, City General Secretaries C.K. Rudramurthy and V. Somasundar, State Executive Member H.G. Giridhar, Chamundeshwari Nagar Mandal President Rakesh Bhatt, senior leader Gopal Rao, former Mayor Shivakumar, leaders of Brahmin organizations D.T. Prakash, Dr. Lakshmidevi, N. Srikanth Kumar, K.R. Satyanarayana, writer Leela Prakash, BJP office-bearers M.R. Balakrishna and K.M. Nishanth, Brahmin youth leaders Vikram Iyengar, Ajay Shastri, Jayasimha, along with BJP mandal presidents, morcha presidents, office-bearers, and leaders of various Brahmin organizations were present.

"Adi Shankaracharya: A timeless beacon of Advaita philosophy"

MYSURU

MLA of Krishnaraja Constituency, T.S. Srivatsa, said that Adi Shankaracharya stands as a global exemplar through his profound propagation of the Advaita philosophy.

He was speaking after inaugurating the Shankaracharya Jayanti celebrations, organized by the District Administration, Department of Kannada and Culture, Mysuru City Corporation, and the Mysuru Sri Shankaracharya Jayantyotsava Committee at the Mini Theatre in Karnataka Kalamandir premises in the city on Tuesday.

Srivatsa described Shankaracharya as a divine child born out of the intense penance of his parents, adding that it would not be an exaggeration to call him "Bala Shiva", blessed by divine grace. He recalled the many accounts of Shankaracharya traveling across India on foot, spreading the Advaita philosophy. Among the many compositions attributed to him, "Bhaja Govindam" remains one of the most revered.

Highlighting his monumental contributions, the MLC said that Shankaracharya established four major monastic centers (mathas) in the four corners of India and, despite his short lifespan of just 32 years, achieved extraordinary feats that continue to inspire generations.

Swami Sarvajayanandaji of the Kannada Book Publication Division of Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, who graced the occasion, said Shankaracharya accomplished immense work within a brief lifetime and there is a need to present Advaita philosophy in a simple and practical manner so that it can be applied in everyday life and service activities by the common people.

Cultural thinker and critic G.N. Bhat described Shankaracharya as a reviver of Hinduism, noting that both emotional depth and intellectual brilliance found a rare confluence in him. Shankaracharya mastered the four Vedas at the age of eight and was the foremost disciple of Govinda Bhagavatpada. He introduced idol worship as a means to help devotees ascend the path of knowledge.

Bhat added that Shankaracharya was the foremost among the trio of acharyas who spread Sanatana Dharma to the world. Through his extensive travels across the country, he revived Hinduism at a time when it faced challenges from multiple ideologies. By integrating sects such as Shaiva, Vaishnava, Shakta, Ganapatya, Saura, and Skanda traditions, he established the Shanmata system. He was also the first acharya to write commentaries on the Bhagavad Gita, Upanishads, and Brahma Sutras.

The event was attended by Joint Director of the Department of Kannada and Culture V.N. Mallikarjunaswamy, Assistant Director Dr. M.D. Sudarshan, and dignitaries including G.T. Prakash and Srikanth Kumar.

Intl workshop on Generic Drugs at JSS AHER on April 23–24

MYSURU

The JSS Academy of Higher Education & Research (JSS AHER), Mysuru, will host a two-day international workshop on "Generic Drugs: Science, Technology, Regulatory Issues and Societal Dimensions in the Developing World" on April 23 and 24.

The programme will begin at 10 a.m. at the Sri Rajendra Auditorium, located within JSS Medical College.

The workshop is being jointly organised in collaboration with the Centre for Science and Technology of the Non-Aligned and Other Developing Countries, New Delhi, and the Indian Association of Colleges of Pharmacy, Chennai.

The event aims to provide a multidisciplinary platform for academicians, researchers, regulators, industry professionals, and policymakers to deliberate on key aspects of generic drug development. Discussions will focus on formulation strategies, manufacturing technologies, regulatory approval pathways, pharmacovigilance systems, intellectual property frameworks, and the broader public health impact of generic medicines.

Dr. Bobby George, Vice President and Group Head (Regulatory Affairs), Reliance Life Sciences Pvt. Ltd., will inaugurate the workshop as Chief Guest. Dr. C G Betsurmath will preside over the inaugural session.

Guests of Honour include Dr. Amitava Bandopadhyay, Director General of NAM S&T Centre; Dr. B. Suresh, Pro-Chancellor, JSS AHER; Dr. H. Basavanagowdappa, Vice-Chancellor, JSS AHER; Dr. B. Manjunatha, Registrar, JSS AHER; Dr. T. V. Narayana; and Dr. T. Jayapal Reddy.

The two-day programme will feature expert lectures, panel discussions, and interactive sessions on themes such as the future of generic medicines, bioequivalence and quality assurance, global regulatory pathways, and societal implications.

Around 300 delegates, including faculty members, research scholars, postgraduate students, regulators, and industry professionals from India and abroad, are expected to participate.

"Following Philosophers' ideals eliminates need for excess laws"

MYSURU

District and Sessions Judge Usha Rani said there is no need for excessive laws if the ideas of great philosophers are followed.

Speaking after inaugurating World Philosophers' Day, organized by the Mysuru Bar Association at its office on Tuesday, she said that the teachings of the trio of Acharyas have served as a guiding light for thousands of people across the country. Therefore, celebrating their birth anniversaries is important to promote their religious contributions and teachings. If people follow the principles laid down by such great personalities, there would be no need to formulate special laws.

The judge explained that Adi Shankaracharya, Sri Ramanujacharya, and Sri Madhvacharya are three great Acharyas of Indian Vedantic philosophy. Based on the Vedas, Upanishads, Brahma Sutras, and the Bhagavad Gita, they propounded different philosophical systems. Their contributions played a significant role in revitalizing Hinduism, harmonizing devotion and knowledge, and bringing about spiritual and social transformation in Indian society.

She noted that Shankaracharya established the primacy of knowledge in philosophy, unified Hinduism, and reduced the influence of Buddhism. Even today, Advaita remains a major intellectual stream of Hindu philosophy. Similarly, Ramanujacharya propounded Vishishtadvaita, and Madhvacharya advocated Dvaita philosophy, thereby giving a strong foundation to Hinduism. Due to the spread of these philosophies, the dominance of Jainism, which was expanding significantly at that time, declined.

Senior advocate K.R. Nagaraj spoke about the impact and significance of the philosophies and doctrines of the Acharya trio during their time.

Mysuru Bar Association President S. Lokesh, Vice President M.V. Chandrashekar, Secretary Sur, Joint Secretary Charan Raj, Treasurer H.B. Basavaraj, and others were present.

Mock CET 2026 held successfully at VVIET

MYSURU

The Vidya Vikas Institute of Engineering & Technology (VVIET) successfully conducted the Mock Common Entrance Test (CET) 2026 at its campus, offering aspiring engineering students a valuable opportunity to experience a real-time examination environment ahead of the Karnataka CET.

The event saw enthusiastic participation from over 400 students representing various institutions across Mysuru and nearby regions, including Mandya, Malavalli, K.R. Nagar, Nanjangud, H.D. Kote, Hunsur, Tumkuru, and Tiptur.

The test followed a structured registration process, closely replicating the format and discipline of the actual CET. Designed to simulate real exam conditions, the mock test enabled students to evaluate their preparation levels, improve time management skills, and refine their exam strategies. The smooth conduct of the examination reflected the meticulous planning and coordinated efforts of the organizing team.

Participants expressed high levels of satisfaction with the quality of the question paper and the overall organization of the event. Many students noted that the mock test significantly boosted their confidence and helped them identify areas needing improvement. The valedictory function featured cultural programs and prize distribution.

Prize winners

Raghunandan from Sadvidya College secured the first prize, winning Rs 15,000. Alok G A of Trinity College claimed the second prize of Rs 10,000, while Manan T N from Navkis PU College won the third prize of Rs 5,000. Consolation prizes were awarded to Nethrashree S, Advaith K V, and Isha Mariyaam.

The management, Principal and faculty of VVIET commended the active participation of students and reiterated their commitment to promoting academic excellence through such initiatives.

Shankara Jayanti: Rathotsava held by devotees

MYSURU

On the occasion of Sri Shankara Jayanti, Rathotsaa of Sri Shankaracharya was organized by Sri Prasanna Vishweshwaraswamy Temple located in Chamarajapuram in Mysuru on Tuesday.

The procession passed through the main streets of Chamarajapuram, Krishnamurthypuram, Lakshmipuram, and Jayanagar. It featured a group of priests chanting Vedic hymns, a women's bhajan group, and traditional nadaswara music, all of which attracted attention. Participants in the Sri Shankara Rathotsava included M. N. Jayaram, Madhu, Mohan, Vikram Iyengar, Ajay Shastri, B. N. Jayaram, Nanjundaswamy, Manjunath, Murali, and others.

Bengaluru census drive opens doors for public, 1,000 enumerators to be hired

Civic body invites citizens to join Census 2027 work through interviews

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

In a significant step to streamline the upcoming census process, the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) has opened its doors to the public, announcing plans to recruit around 1,000 enumerators through a direct interview process. The initiative aims to ensure efficient and timely completion of Census 2027 activities while encouraging citizen participation in a key national exercise.

The selection process will be conducted at Town Hall, where eligible candidates will be shortlisted through interviews. Officials said the move is designed to attract youth and qualified individuals by offering an honorarium and an opportunity to contribute to large-scale data collection work.

Applicants must have a minimum qualification of second PUC or higher and should possess a smartphone with at least Android 12 and 4GB RAM, as enumeration will be carried out digitally. Preference will be given to residents within BBMP limits, particularly from constituencies such as CV Raman Nagar, Shantinagar, Shivajinagar, Chamarajpet, Chikkapete and Gandhinagar.

Authorities have clarified that selected candidates must be willing to work continuously, including on holidays, as the census schedule is already underway. The house listing and housing census phase began on April 16 and will continue until May 15, 2026. During this period, each enumerator will be assigned around 150 to 200 households. An honorarium of ₹9,000 will be provided for this phase in line with Census 2027 guidelines.

The second phase is scheduled for February 2027, during which enumerators will collect detailed population data covering approximately 750 to 800 individuals or 150 to 200 households. For this stage, an honorarium of ₹16,000 will be paid.

Officials added that all selected candidates will undergo mandatory training before being deployed in the field to ensure accuracy and consistency in data collection. The GBA emphasised that the recruitment is temporary and strictly limited to census work, with no assurance of permanent employment. Final selection will be made at the discretion of the GBA Commissioner.

QUICK READ

Police recover snatched phone within minutes in Bengaluru

CH NEWS, BENGALURU
In a swift late-night operation, Hoysala police recovered a mobile phone within minutes after it was snatched near Ambedkar Nagar. The incident occurred around 11.58 pm when a delivery executive was allegedly targeted by a car driver following a road rage altercation. The accused snatched the phone and fled the scene. The victim immediately contacted the emergency helpline 112, prompting quick action from a Hoysala patrol team led by Assistant Sub-Inspector Venkataramu and Head Constable Anil Kumar. Police called the stolen number, warned the accused of legal consequences, and secured the phone's return. Both parties later reached a compromise.

Vaastu guru files extortion case after sexual abuse allegations

CH NEWS, BENGALURU
A city vaastu expert has filed an extortion complaint after being accused of sexually harassing and assaulting a woman who approached him for professional consultation. The cases have been registered at Govindarajanagar police station in west Bengaluru. According to the woman, the incident occurred on April 4 at a private office in Vijayanagar. The accused, identified as Shantakumar, allegedly assaulted her during the meeting. In a counter-complaint, Shantakumar accused the woman and her associates, Jamal and Amrutalingam, of attempting to blackmail him. Police said both angles are under investigation.

Rottweiler attacks constable in Kalyan Nagar, leaves him injured

CH NEWS, BENGALURU
A police constable was seriously injured after a Rottweiler attacked him in Kalyan Nagar while he was on a routine errand. Sadashiva Ingalagavi (49), attached to the BDA Special Task Force, had stopped on 1st Main Road to take a call when the dog, allegedly unleashed and without a muzzle, attacked him from behind and bit his right leg. The constable said he fought back and called for help before the owner intervened. Hoysala patrol rushed him to hospital. Police registered a case under Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita sections and will issue notice to the owner.

After three decades, intermediate ring road project back on development table

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

The Karnataka government has revived the long-pending Intermediate Ring Road (IRR) project, nearly three decades after it was first conceptualised, in a renewed push to improve regional connectivity and decongest Bengaluru's expanding urban core.

To be implemented by the Bengaluru Metropolitan Regional Development Authority (BMRDA), the 210-km corridor aims to link 12 key satellite towns, including Thattekere, Harohalli, Bidadi, Tavarekere, Nelamangala, Devanahalli, Hoskote, Dommasandra and Anekal. The project is expected to create a seamless mobility loop connecting emerging growth centres on the city's outskirts.

Originally proposed in 2007, the IRR project had remained stalled due to land acquisition hurdles and prolonged litigation. However, following directions from Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar, officials have now revived the plan with a revised approach to minimise legal and logistical challenges.

Urban development department records indicate that parts of the earlier alignment were contested in court, prompting the High Court in August 2022 to direct a realignment. A revised plan was subsequently drawn up in March 2023, but inconsistencies in road width—ranging from 9 metres to 30 metres against the planned 90 metres—led to further reconsideration.

Officials said funding options for implementation are being explored. The IRR will complement major infrastructure initiatives such as the 228-km STRR project, the proposed Bengaluru Business Corridor, and multiple corridor developments aimed at transforming regional mobility.

In December, a high-level review meeting chaired by Shivakumar resulted in a decision to revert largely to the original 2007 alignment with selective modifications. Officials said the earlier alignment had already been integrated into multiple master plans, reducing the likelihood of fresh disputes.

The updated plan also ensures better integration with existing infrastructure, including the Nelamangala Town Ring Road and the Satellite Town Ring Road (STRR), particularly along the Anekal-Hoskote stretch. Authorities have also worked to minimise disruption to existing layouts while maintaining connectivity objectives.

One of the key advantages of the revived project is its cost efficiency. Officials noted that land falling within approved layouts could be obtained through relinquishment deeds from developers, significantly reducing the burden of acquisition costs on the government.

BMRDA Commissioner Rajendra Cholan said the authority already holds 175 acres and will pursue additional land as required. The IRR is expected to bridge critical gaps between the STRR and the proposed Peripheral Ring Road, accelerating development in surrounding townships.

BESCOM threatens power cut after apartment owner presses complaint

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

The Bangalore Electricity Supply Company (BESCOM) has warned of disconnecting power supply to an apartment complex in Jayamahal after a resident raised objections over the relocation of electrical transformers within the premises, triggering a dispute over safety and regulatory compliance.

The issue began in October last year when two transformers were shifted within the Neeladri Mahal apartment complex to an area previously used as a children's play space. Flat owner Tasleem Jeelani alleged that the relocation was carried out without the consent of residents and contrary to earlier assurances that a compact and safer unit would be installed.

Jeelani said tenants reported sparks from the transformers, particularly during rains, raising safety concerns. He subsequently filed a complaint with the Department of Electrical Inspectorate, citing risks to residents and violation of safety norms.

Following the complaint, the Deputy Chief Electrical Inspector for Bengaluru Additional East Zone inspected the site on February 16. In a letter to BESCOM's Assistant Executive Engineer, the official noted that mandatory safety clearance had not been obtained for the relocation and sought an explanation within seven days, citing violations of Central Electricity Authority regulations. Internal correspondence within BESCOM in February and March indicates that the matter was escalated through various levels, including communications from the Executive Engineer and the Superintending Engineer.

City hotels explore biogas to cut LPG reliance and waste costs

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Hotels and restaurants in Bengaluru are increasingly turning to biogas as an alternative fuel source, seeking to reduce dependence on LPG and manage rising waste disposal costs more efficiently.

The shift comes amid concerns over higher wet waste charges under the empanelled vendor system introduced by Bangalore Solid Waste Management Ltd, where rates are capped at ₹12 per kg but remain negotiable.

Industry stakeholders fear that vendors may push prices higher, significantly increasing operational expenses for bulk waste generators. The hospitality sector, which contributes nearly 40% of the city's total waste, sees biogas as a viable solution to convert food waste into usable energy for kitchens.

Most hotels generate over 100 kg of waste daily and fall under the bulk waste category. Earlier, waste disposal was handled through lumpsum payments, but the revised pricing structure has prompted a rethink among businesses. Bengaluru Hotels Association (BHA) Honorary President P.C. Rao said the additional burden of waste disposal charges, combined with existing taxes and commercial expenses, is becoming unsustainable for the sector.

In response, the association is exploring plans to set up decentralised biogas plants across different parts of the city.

Export hit, eatery shutdowns deepen onion price crash

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

A temporary shutdown of eateries triggered by LPG shortages has intensified an ongoing crash in onion prices across Karnataka, pushing rates well below production costs and leaving farmers and traders in distress amid oversupply and weak demand.

Wholesale onion prices have dropped sharply to ₹500–₹1,000 per quintal, compared to earlier rates of ₹1,200–₹2,000. Retail prices have also fallen significantly, with 8–10 kg now selling for around ₹100. The sharp decline has been attributed to reduced demand from the food services sector and a bumper harvest driven by favourable rainfall. Farmers in key producing districts such as Vijayapura, Chitradurga, Gadag, Ballari, Koppal, Dharwad, Belagavi, Bagalkot, Haveri and Chikkaballapur are facing distress sales, with Chitradurga among the worst affected regions.

Srirama Reddy, President of the Dasanapura APMC Merchants' Association, said nearly 30% of hotels have temporarily shut operations, significantly reducing demand. He added that even premium-quality onions, which earlier fetched ₹20 per kg, are now selling for nearly half that price.

The downturn has also impacted other vegetables, with traders reporting a broader slump in market prices. APMC trader Shiva Kumar noted that the closure of eateries has reduced overall consumption, dragging down rates across produce categories. Export-oriented Bengaluru rose onions have also taken a hit, with prices falling to ₹600–₹800 per quintal. Farmers in Bengaluru Rural, Chikkaballapur and Kolar districts, who depend on exports to Gulf countries, are particularly affected.

B. Madhu, a farmer from Byraganahalli, said he harvested 400 bags of rose onions for export via Chennai, but a decline in demand following geopolitical tensions in Iran led to a price crash. With limited storage options, farmers are struggling to prevent spoilage, as onions begin to rot within a month.

7 years in the making, Victoria Hospital's 10-storey Q-block to open on May 2

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Nearly seven years after construction began, the 10-storey Q-block at Victoria Hospital is set to be inaugurated on May 2, significantly expanding capacity at one of Karnataka's busiest public healthcare facilities. The new block will add 629 beds to the hospital's existing strength of around 1,000, offering relief to thousands of patients who depend on the institution daily.

Victoria Hospital currently records an Out Patient Department (OPD) footfall of 700 to 1,000 patients every day. Officials believe the additional infrastructure will ease congestion, reduce waiting time and improve overall patient care. Medical Education Minister Sharan Prakash Patil said the facility will play a key role in strengthening public healthcare delivery in the city.

The first five floors of the Q-block will house general wards catering to departments such as general surgery, orthopaedics and medicine. The next two floors will accommodate special wards and operation theatres, including a dedicated VVIP section. Two additional floors have been earmarked for a surgical complex equipped with eight operation theatres.

Hospital authorities also plan to develop a helipad on the terrace in the future, further enhancing emergency response capabilities. However, the inclusion of the helipad and other facilities has reduced the originally planned capacity of 1,000 beds in the new building. In a recent review, the minister directed officials to convert one floor into an intensive care unit (ICU) complex. Authorities are currently assessing how to integrate ICU facilities without affecting other services.

The project has also seen a rise in costs, with the initial estimate of ₹68 crore increasing to ₹90 crore over the years due to delays and additional infrastructure requirements.

Dr S. Deepak, Medical Superintendent of Victoria Hospital, said tenders for procurement of beds and medical equipment have already been floated, and recruitment of nurses, Group D staff and other personnel is underway.

Equipment for two floors has already been delivered, while the remaining installations are in progress. The orthopaedics department is expected to shift from the old block to the new facility once operations begin.

BURDEN FOR BOOZERS

Liquor with higher alcohol content to cost more under new excise rule

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Alcoholic beverages with higher alcohol content are set to become costlier in Karnataka, while lower-strength variants may turn relatively cheaper under a proposed overhaul of the state's excise policy that links duty directly to alcohol content.

According to Excise Commissioner R. Venkatesh Kumar, the state is introducing a first-of-its-kind taxation system based on Alcohol by Volume (ABV) per litre, replacing the existing structure tied to maximum retail price (MRP). Under the draft amendment, stronger liquor will attract higher taxes, potentially reshaping pricing across segments.

Excise Minister R.B. Thimmapur said the draft notification issued under the Karnataka Excise Act, 1965, has been opened for public objections and suggestions for seven days. The final framework will be notified after stakeholder consultations, with the government balancing revenue considerations and market impact.

He clarified that the base duty of ₹1,000 per litre of pure alcohol will remain unchanged, while additional excise duties will be recalibrated under the new system.

The proposal also reduces the number of duty slabs from 16 to eight, ranging from ₹50 per litre of pure alcohol in lower segments to ₹3,700 for premium categories priced above ₹5,000. Beer will fall under separate slabs ranging between ₹800 and ₹2,700.

Market response to the announcement was positive, with shares of major liquor companies rising during intraday trade. Industry experts believe the shift could further drive premiumisation trends across categories such as whisky, gin, vodka, rum and brandy. Abneesh Roy of Nuvama Institutional Equities noted that whisky in India typically ranges between 36 percent and 50 percent ABV, while beer varies from 4 to 8 percent. Premium imported spirits and Indian single malts often have higher strengths, making them more sensitive to the proposed tax changes. Federation of Wine Merchants' Association General Secretary B. Govindaraj Hegde said the impact on pricing will vary.

Lower-priced categories could see a 15–20 percent increase, while premium segments may witness marginal reductions depending on alcohol strength adjustments.

Officials added that concessional rates will continue for defence and paramilitary canteens under the revised structure.

QUICK READ

KSRTC bus overturns near Tumakuru, injures passengers

TUMAKURU

A KSRTC bus overturned near M.H. Pattana in Gubbi taluk after the driver reportedly lost control of the vehicle. The bus was travelling from Gubbi towards Tumakuru when the accident occurred. Around 50 passengers were on board, including women, children, and students. Many suffered minor injuries but avoided serious harm. All the injured were immediately shifted to Gubbi Government Public Hospital for first aid and treatment. Officials said the bus went off the road and toppled on its side. Police have visited the spot and are investigating the cause of the accident further.

Court canteen applications open in Holalkere

CHITRADURGA

Applications have been invited from interested hoteliers to run a canteen in the Holalkere Taluk Court premises for public use. The notification has been issued by the Principal District and Sessions Judge of Chitradurga. Applicants must submit sealed quotations with food items, prices, and details before 5 pm on April 27. The bids will be opened on April 28 at 5 pm in the presence of the District Judge. The selected operator will get an 11-month licence, extendable up to three years. A security deposit of Rs.25,000 is required. The canteen must follow strict hygiene rules and court timings.

Mandya DC reviews digital census progress

MANDYA

Deputy Commissioner Dr. Kumar inspected the ongoing digital census work in Mandya city and reviewed its progress. The census, being conducted from April 2026 in digital format, is aimed at collecting accurate population data. During the visit, the DC urged citizens to cooperate with officials and provide correct information when they come to households. He said public support is important for smooth and accurate completion of the census process. Mandya Sub-Divisional Officer M. Shivamurthy, Municipal Commissioner Pampashree, and other officials were present during the inspection and review meeting in the city.

CM highlights Basava Jayanti social reform message

CM marked Basava Jayanti in Hunsur, praising Basavanna's equality ideals, announcing cultural leader status, and promoting his philosophy beyond caste and religion.

HUNSUR

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah said the government is celebrating Basava Jayanti in Hunsur with devotion and respect for Basavanna, the social reformer who fought caste inequality. He spoke at the Basava Jayanti and Basavadwara inauguration event at Madahalli Math led by Basava Samiti president Handanahalli Somashekar and former MLA H.P. Manjunath. He said Basavanna wanted a casteless and classless society and identified himself with the oppressed to promote equality and social justice. He added that equality fraternity and justice are also the foundation of the Constitution and Basavanna's ideals reflect them. He said the cabinet had declared Basavanna a cultural leader and government orders were issued to display his photo in offices. He noted Basava Jayanti is now celebrated even abroad and the philosophy goes beyond caste and religion boundaries. During the programme, MLA Harish Gowda raised issues including irrigation, sewage entering Lakshmana Theertha river, hospital development,

and upgrading Hunsur infrastructure. Former MLA H.P. Manjunath praised the development work in the region and thanked the Chief Minister for progress in the area. Religious leaders and ministers including several swamijis and officials attended the programme. The event also saw participation from Shivaratri Deshikendra Swamiji of Suttur Math, Madahalli Math seer, Gavadagere Math seer, and state leaders. They emphasized unity and development goals for Hunsur region and called for continued.

JDS leads protest over women reservation bill

RAMANAGARA

JD(S) workers protested in Ramanagara against INDIA alliance over women's reservation bill stand, calling it anti-women and demanding stronger political representation

JDS party workers held a protest in Ramanagara on Tuesday against the Congress-led INDIA alliance over its stand on the women's reservation bill in the Lok Sabha. The protest took place at Ijoor Circle and was led by former MLA A. Manjunath and district president H.C. Jayamuthu. Leaders said the opposition to the bill is an injustice to women and affects their representation. A. Manjunath said the party has opposed a law meant to strengthen women's political rights and representation. He said the protest is symbolic and aims to highlight the issue of women's political empowerment. H.C. Jayamuthu said earlier governments supported women's reservation and criticized the Congress for its stand. Protesters expressed anger and said voters would respond in future elections. The demonstration also included slogans and participation from several women leaders and party workers. Participants accused the Congress of weakening women's rights through its policy decisions. Leaders from differeparts of the district attended the protest and supported the cause. The event concluded with calls for stronger support for women's reservation in politics. Organizers said the protest was part of a statewide movement to demand clarity and commitment on women's reservation and to ensure equal political opportunities for women in all levels of governance. Party leaders said they will continue awareness campaigns and public outreach on the issue across the district in the coming days. Several senior leaders, women activists, and local supporters joined the gathering, making it a large-scale demonstration in the city. Police and officials maintained order throughout the protest to ensure peace and smooth conduct of the event.

DC G. Prabhu ordered land titles and e-property documents for housing beneficiaries, with site allotment by May 15

DC orders e-property with land title distribution

CHIKKABALLAPURA

Deputy Commissioner G. Prabhu has directed officials to issue land title deeds along with e-property documents for beneficiaries under housing and shelter schemes in the district. He issued the instruction during a review meeting on site allotment and census work held at the District Collectorate on Tuesday.He said about 308.47 acres of land is available under various housing schemes in rural and urban areas, and around 8,939 sites can be allotted to eligible beneficiaries. He instructed officials to ensure development of approved lands by May 15.The Deputy Commissioner stressed that selection of beneficiaries must be done strictly through Gram Sabhas as per government rules. He warned that no pressure or recommendations should be accepted during the selection

process.He said priority should be given to applicants already surveyed and those who applied in 2018, following the principle of first come first served. He added that irregular allotment of sites to ineligible persons will not be tolerated and may affect the entire administrative system. He also directed district level officers to closely monitor Gram Panchayat level work and ensure proper documentation, including photographs and video records of meetings.On census work, he said it is a constitutional duty and no leave will be granted to assigned staff during the process. He warned of disciplinary action if work is not completed on time and noted that progress in some areas is slow.He also instructed officials to set up taluk level helplines for immediate response to drinking water problems and ensure tanker supply within 24 hours if required.Senior officials including the Zilla Panchayat CEO and Sub Divisional Officer attended the meeting.

Awareness drive calls for end untouchability mindset

HUNSUR

Tahsildar Manjunath said untouchability is a mental illness and must be removed through awareness and law together. He spoke at the inauguration of an awareness program held at Ambedkar Bhavan organized by the Social Welfare Department and Light Service Organization. He said untouchability and caste discrimination have affected Dalits for many years and still block social equality in some areas. Though laws exist, he noted that practice continues in some rural places and needs strong public resistance and awareness. Councilor Manasa said women must be educated and should stand with self respect to oppose social injustice.

Officer Harish shared an example where an Anganwadi initially faced boycott from upper caste families but later acceptance grew. He said persistence helped bring change and urged patience while promoting equality in society.

Anjaneya demands urgent internal reservation

CHITRADURGA

Former Minister H. Anjaneya has demanded that the job recruitment process be stopped until internal reservation for Scheduled Castes is finalized in Karnataka He spoke at a press conference held in the city tourist centre and urged the government to take a final decision in the special cabinet meeting scheduled on April 24 He said delay has created confusion among SC communities and added that other states have already implemented internal reservation Earlier Supreme Court had given states power to implement it but Karnataka is yet to complete the process.

He alleged that recruitment for Horticulture Department posts through Karnataka Examination Authority

Farmers receive massive modern agriculture boost: Minister

MANDYA

Minister N Cheluvarayaswamy said that an Agricultural University has been established in Mandya for the development of farmers and urged them to make full use of its facilities.

He was speaking at the inauguration of the Hi-Tech Harvest Hub and secondary agriculture machinery distribution programme held at Mandya University campus.

He said agricultural machinery worth more than two thousand crore rupees has been distributed to farmers in the last three years under various schemes.

About four hundred high-tech harvest hub machines have been given to farmers across Karnataka, helping them reduce labour cost and improve efficiency during harvest.

The minister said subsidy support includes fifty lakh rupees for Scheduled Caste farmers and forty lakh rupees for general category farmers which is one of the largest support systems in the country.

He also said crop insurance coverage has increased from twelve lakh farmers earlier to twenty eight lakh farmers now with around six thousand crore rupees paid as insurance support.

Later District In-charge Minister N Cheluvarayaswamy distributed thirteen Hi-Tech Harvest Hub machines to selected farmer beneficiaries at the event.Officials including Deputy Commissioner Dr Kumar, Zilla Panchayat CEO KR Nandini and Agriculture Department officers attended the programme.

The minister said these initiatives will strengthen agriculture in Mandya and help farmers adopt modern practices for better income and sustainability.

He added that Mandya district will also benefit.

CHITRADURGA PLANS MEANINGFUL BUDDHA JAYANTI CELEBRATION

CHITRADURGA

Sub-Divisional Officer K. J. Kantaraj said Buddha Jayanti, marking the birth anniversary of Lord Buddha, will be celebrated in a meaningful way by the district administration. He was speaking at a preparatory meeting held at the District Collector's office hall.

He said the teachings of Gautama Buddha, who spread the message of peace and non-violence, remain relevant in all times and should inspire harmony in society.

As part of the programme on May 1, a cultural procession carrying tableaux depicting Buddha's teachings will be taken out on main streets at 9 a.m. A stage programme will follow at 11 a.m. near the Buddha statue in front of the Onake Obavva District Stadium.

Officials said a special lecture on Buddha's life and principles will be arranged to create awareness among youth. Due to the summer season, arrangements for drinking water, seating and basic facilities will be ensured for the public attending the event.

Authorities also decided to install banners at key locations, including bus stands, to spread awareness about the celebration.

Assistant Director of Kannada and Culture Department B.M. Gurunath urged public participation to make the district-level programme successful.

Officials also discussed repairing and repainting the Buddha statue in front of the stadium, where minor cracks were observed.

Leaders and officials requested participation from students and organisations in the cultural procession to make the event successful and promote the message of peace, unity and compassion in society.

FREE COACHING INITIATIVE

CET NEET coaching continues for students

RAMANAGARA

Municipal Corporation President K. Seshadri Shashi said CET NEET and JEE coaching for government college students will continue in 2026-27 academic year to support poor and middle class families in Ramanagara. Speaking at the closing ceremony held at a pre university college with Akka IAS Academy he said the program aims to give equal opportunity for competitive exam preparation without financial burden on parents. He said private coaching

costs more than one lakh rupees but the municipality has made it free so students can prepare better for CET NEET and JEE exams.

Dr. Shivakumar director of Akka Academy said this is first such initiative by a municipal body in the state and they will continue guidance for students in future competitive exams. He advised students to stay healthy eat simple food sleep well and remain calm before exams to improve performance. Municipal Commissioner Dr. Jayanna asked students to work hard and bring pride to their parents and college through success.

College Principal Ansar Ul Haq said free coaching has created history in Ramanagara and increased confidence among government college students. He said earlier students had to travel to Bengaluru for costly coaching but now local support is helping many families. Project Director G.D. Shekhar praised the program and said students must use this opportunity well to achieve good ranks in entrance exams. He added that success depends on discipline dedication and continuous practice by students in coming days.

College lecturers and trainers also attended the program and expressed happiness over the initiative which supports rural and poor students in higher education. Program strengthens students future opportunities.

Shankaracharya message of humanity inspires Mandya event

MANDYA

Additional Superintendent of Police Gangadhar Swami said Shankaracharya spread a message of humanity and worked for the welfare of the world. He was speaking at the Sri Shankaracharya Jayanti programme held at Kalamandir in Mandya, organised by District Administration, Kannada and Culture Department. He said Shankaracharya promoted Advaita philosophy and strengthened values of Hinduism that guide society even today. He urged people to follow his ideals to maintain peace and harmony in society.

Assistant Director B V Nandish and leaders Shankaranarayana Shastri, B G Uma, and Gopalakrishna Shenoy attended the programme. The programme highlighted Shankaracharya's contribution to spiritual thought and his role in spreading unity among people. Speakers said his teachings continue to inspire society to live with respect, discipline and understanding. The event saw participation from officials, cultural representatives and community leaders who paid tribute to his legacy.

QUICK READ

Planned power cut to hit Gokarna areas

KARWAR

A planned power shutdown will affect Gokarna and nearby rural areas on April 22 due to urgent maintenance work. Officials said the 33KV Gokarna line under Kumta sub-division will be repaired, causing power cut from 10 am to 5 pm in Gokarna branch areas. In rural sections, work on 11KV Bada and 11KV Masura lines and a new 11KV line near Nagura and Khandagara in Mirjana will also lead to disruption. Authorities requested public cooperation and asked consumers to plan ahead. HESCOM officials said the work is necessary for better and safer electricity supply for consumers in the region said

Chitradurga professor earns PhD degree honour

CHITRADURGA

Assistant Professor C.N. Venkatesh of SJM Arts, Science and Commerce College in Chitradurga has been awarded a PhD degree by Vijayanagara Sri Krishnadevaraya University. His research was carried out in the Department of Pure Sciences under the guidance of Dr. Shashikant H. Majagi from the Zoology Department. Venkatesh completed his thesis titled "Ecological Studies of Mallapur Lake Chitradurga District with Special Reference to Heavy Metal Toxicity."

The study focused on environmental conditions and pollution impact in the lake. College staff and colleagues congratulated him for his academic achievement and contribution to ecological research.

Mandali slams BJP over women reservation row

Mandali said Cong supports women's reservation, citing past policies, while accusing BJP of delaying implementation

GADAG

Ashok Mandali said BJP has double standards on women's reservation and Congress has long record of supporting social equality. He said Congress first gave 33 percent reservation for women in local bodies during Rajiv Gandhi government. He said there are nearly 15 lakh elected women representatives across India due to that policy.

He claimed BJP is wrongly accusing Congress on women's bill even though Congress MPs supported the 2023 Nari Shakti Vandan Act. He said the bill has delay conditions like census and delimitation which postpone real implementation.Mandali alleged BJP promised women's reservation before elections but failed to implement it even after coming to power in 2014 and 2019. He said Congress governments have always taken historic steps like constitutional equality, laws against dowry and domestic violence, and women's empowerment programs. He also highlighted Karnataka schemes like Shakti Yojana free bus travel and Gruhalakshmi scheme giving monthly support to women. He said these programs have strengthened women financially and increased their participation in social and economic activities.He added that BJP is trying to delay real reservation benefits while using it as an election promise. He urged voters to recognize Congress contribution to women's empowerment and support inclusive development policies. He said reservation delay is denying political space to women in upcoming elections.Mandali claimed BJP is focusing on publicity rather than real empowerment of women. He said Congress approach ensures participation of women from all communities including backward classes. He said the goal is equal opportunity and stronger representation of women in governance. He also pointed to past Congress reforms that created legal rights and protections for women in India.He said these reforms include property rights, workplace safety laws and anti violence measures. He said the government continues to focus on welfare and financial independence for rural women. He called for unity and support for policies that strengthen women's role in society.

Pensioners submit 13-key demands to centre

HOSAPETE

Members of the All India Federation of State Government Pensioners and the Karnataka State Government Pensioners Union submitted a petition to the Prime Minister through the Hosapete Tahsildar, raising 13 major demands for pensioners' welfare.The pensioners urged the government to repeal the Finance Bill (Validation Act) 2025 and scrap the New Pension Scheme while restoring the old pension system.They also demanded that Dearness Allowance be increased on par with central pensioners across all states. Another key demand was to extend Eighth Pay Commission benefits to employees retiring by December 31, 2025.

The group called for reducing the pension commutation recovery period to 11 years and clearing 18 months of Dearness Allowance arrears from the Covid-19 period with interestThey further demanded implementation of court rulings for all employees, restoration of travel concessions in trains, flights, Volvo and AC buses, and introduction of comprehensive health insurance for pensioners. The petition also suggested increasing pension gradually with age, starting from 10% after 65 years up to full pension at 95 years.Other demands included stopping privatization of public sector enterprises and repealing new labour laws. Pensioner leaders said these measures are essential to improve the living standards and financial security of retired employees across the country.Union representatives including Maradi Jambaiah Nayaka, Bisati Tayappa Nayaka and Nagaraj Pattar were present during the submission and urged the central government

Pensioners in Hosapete submitted 13 demands to PM, including old pension restoration, DA hike, pay commission benefits, arrears clearance, and improved welfare measures

DC K. Lakshmi Priya urged HPV vaccination for 14–15-year-old girls, ensuring free coverage and coordinated cervical cancer prevention

HPV vaccine drive launched to protect girls: Lakshmi

KARWAR

Deputy Commissioner K. Lakshmi Priya said HPV vaccination should be given to girls aged 14 to 15 to prevent cervical cancer in the district. She chaired a meeting at the District Collector Office hall reviewing progress of the vaccination programme on Tuesday.

She said cervical cancer is one of the most common cancers among women in India and can be prevented through HPV vaccination. The Health and Family Welfare Department has made the vaccine available free for all eligible girls in the district. She asked the Education Department to inform parents and students about vaccination and spread awareness in schools and villages. Public awareness will also be created through vehicles and local bodies in rural and urban areas of the district.

Officials said the vaccine is safe and has no major side effects according to health studies and reports. Parents have been urged to ensure their children receive the vaccine to prevent future health risks. The vaccination programme has already started in the district and sufficient stock of doses is available. The Deputy Commissioner directed all departments including Revenue, Education, Urban Local Bodies and Gram Panchayats to coordinate the campaign. She instructed officials to aim for complete coverage so that no eligible girl is left out of vaccination. Officials from the Health Department, District administration and local bodies participated in the meeting through video conference and assured full cooperation to achieve successful implementation of the programme across all taluks in Karwar district in coming months. We aim to protect every eligible girl.

District marks Basavanna Shankaracharya Jayanti with reverence

BENGALURU RURAL

On the occasion of Basava Jayanti and Shankaracharya Jayanti, District Collector Dr. K. N. Anuradha paid floral tributes to the portraits of Basavanna and Adi Shankaracharya near the bronze statue of Basavanna within the District Administration Building premises.

The event marked the 893rd birth anniversary of Kayakayogi Basavanna and the 1238th Jayanti of Shankaracharya, observed with respect and community participation.

The programme was jointly organised by the District Administration, Zilla Panchayat, and the Kannada and Culture Department, aiming to spread the teachings of both great philosophers among the public.Additional District Collector Syeda Aisha, G.P Deputy Secretary Shivakumar, and religious leaders including Sri Mahanta Shivacharya Swamiji of Bellavi Math and Basavaraja Swamiji of Khani Math attended the ceremony.Community leaders Jagadish, Manjunath, Virupaksha, Annappa, Shanta Murthy, Ramesh, and Nagesh were also present, along with district officials and staff members.

Speakers highlighted Basavanna's message of equality and honest work, and Shankaracharya's philosophy of spiritual unity and knowledge. The celebrations were conducted in a simple yet meaningful manner, encouraging citizens to follow values that promote harmony in society. Many attendees said such events help younger generations understand the lives and ideas of these revered figures. The administration stated that similar programmes will continue to be held to keep cultural and moral traditions alive in the district.

Farmers arrested after black flag protest row

CHAMARAJANAGAR

Police in Gundlupet arrested farmers who were heading to protest against Chief Minister Siddaramaiah with black flags. The group belonged to the Karnataka State Farmers Association and was led by Dr Guruprasad. They were protesting over alleged irregularities in a plan to fill 110 lakes with river water. Farmers said the project ignored a four stage water distribution system from the river source. They also said their complaints were not heard, so they planned a black flag protest. Police stopped the march early and took the protesters into custody to prevent unrest.

Dr Guruprasad said the farmers had planned to submit a demand letter but felt it would be ignored or discarded by authorities. He added that turning lakes into a so called project without proper steps would harm farmers and waste resources in the district.

Shankaracharya legacy inspires unity and discipline

CHITRADURGA

Sri Shankaracharya who travelled across India in a short span of 32 years and established Advaita philosophy remains an ideal for today's generation said Sub-Divisional Officer Dr. K.J. Kantaraj at a Jayanti programme in Chitradurga.He said Shankaracharya revived Sanatan Dharma and created cultural unity by setting up monasteries in four directions of the country including Sringeri Puri Badrinath and Dwarka.He noted that people today often feel confused about life direction even after many years while Shankaracharya achieved spiritual and social reform at a young age.The programme was organised by the District Administration Zilla Panchayat Kannada and Culture Department and Municipal Council at the District Collector Office Hall.Speakers highlighted that Shankaracharya was not only a philosopher but also a poet and musician. His works like Bhajagovindam continue to guide society with simple spiritual meaning. He spread the idea of Advaita that the soul and the Supreme are one and taught people to rise above superstition and division.Chitradurga Brahmin Sangha president P.S. Manjunath said Shankaracharya message is still relevant and promotes unity among Indians. He stressed that public work should be done with devotion and discipline.K.R. Ramadevi said Shankaracharya united India through his travels and established Amnaya Peethas which strengthened cultural bonds.

RUDSET launches desktop publishing skill training drive

BRAHMAVAR

The Rural Development and Self Employment Training Institute RUDSET Institute in Brahmavar has launched a 15-day Desktop Publishing training programme aimed at promoting self-employment among youth.The programme was inaugurated by Dr. Nagesh E., Senior Manager at Canara Bank's Regional Office in East Bengaluru. He praised RUDSET Institute for its continuous efforts in empowering unemployed youth across the country through skill-based training and self-employment opportunities.Dr. Nagesh told trainees that skill and enthusiasm within every individual can lead to success.

He encouraged participants to think creatively, adopt new ideas and develop innovative approaches to achieve their goals in life.Giriyappa M., Senior Manager of Canara Bank and former RSETI Bengaluru director, shared motivational success stories of earlier trainees and urged participants to identify their strengths and convert them into income-generating ventures.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, CHANDRAREDDY S/o CHANGAREDDY R/o Manighatta, Shanubhoganahalli, Kolar, Karnataka-563101, have changed the name of my minor son YASHU C aged 14 years and he shall hereafter be known as YASHAS C.

NAME CHANGE

I, **JAGADESAN E**, S/o. Ellesan Ningappagundu, Resident of No.54, Madeshwara Layout, Madeshwara Temple, Shanubhoganahalli, Bannerghatta, Bengaluru Rural-560083, have changed my name to **JAGADESHAN ELLESAN**, Vide Affidavit Dated: 21.04.2026 before notary G. DAYANANDA, Bengaluru.

NAME CHANGE

I, **ABDUL KHALIQ**, resident of No 28, 16th Main, 10th A Cross, BTM Layout, 2nd Stage, Bannerghatta Road Post, Bengaluru- 560076, have changed my Minor daughter's name from **ALIZA FATIMAH to MAHI GULZAR** , vide affidavit dated: 16.04.2026, before Notary R.BASAVARAJA, Bengaluru.

NAME CHANGE

I, **SIDDALINGAPPA,** Residing at Ganga nilaya 6th sisira cross Manjunath nagar kyathsandra Post Tumkur 572104 karnataka. have changed my name to **SIDDALINGAPPA R.**, vide affidavit dated: 17.04.2026 before notary RAMESH NAIK.C,Tumkur.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, SHANKAR ASHOK SHINDE S/o ASHOK SHINDE, R/o No-154/5, Muskaan Residency, 1st A Main, 8th Block, Kormangala, VI Block, Bengaluru, Karnataka-560095, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as SHANKAR THACKUR.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, ASHA T BHAT W/o LATE THIMMANNA G BHAT R/o No 1678, 7th Main, E Block, Rajajinagar 2nd Stage, Rajajinagar 2nd Block, Bengaluru, Bangalore, Karnataka-560010, have changed the name of my minor daughter A T PANNAGASHREE aged 17 years and she shall hereafter be known as PANNAGA BHAT.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, JAYESH TARANATH SHETTY S/o TARANATH G SHETTY, R/o 3-W-26-2191/30, Jay Karan, Manjushree Layout, Kadri Temple New Road, Kadri, Kankanady, Mangalore, Dakshina Kannada, Karnataka-575002, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as JAYESH TARANATH SHETTY SHETTY.

NAME CHANGE

I, **MOHAMMED TABREZ MOHAMMED NISAR**, S/o. Mohammed Nisar, Resident of No.5, Veerabhadra Mudaliar Street, Near Health & Glow, Frazer Town, Bengaluru -560005, have changed my name to **MOHAMMED TABREZ**, Vide Affidavit Dated: 16.04.2026 before notary R Basavaraja, Bengaluru.

IN THE COURT OF THE II ADDITIONAL CIVIL JUDGE, AT DODDABALLAPUR
C.Mis.No. 1067/2025

Between: SMT. SUMITHRA BAI D/o Late Govinda Naika W/o Manjunatha Naika Aged about 40 years, R/ at: Melinanayakarandahalli Village, Tubagere Hobli, Doddaballapura Taluk, Bangalore Rural District. And others **PETITIONERS**

And: The Tahsildar, Doddaballapura Taluk. **RESPONDENT**

PUBLIC NOTICE

Whereas the petitioners have filed the above petition under Section 13(3) and 14 of Registration of Births and Deaths act 1969, for seeking the death certificate of the mother of petitioners by name SMT.SAKI BAI W/O LATE GOVINDANAIKA died on 21.01.1984 Melina nayakarandahalli Village, Tubagere Hobli, Doddaballapura Taluk.

In this regard it is hereby notice that whoever has interested in the said matter may appear in person or through an Advocate duly authorized before the above said court on 06.05.2026 at 11 A.M./forenoon. In default this matter will be heard and disposed off an ex-parte.

Given under my hand and seal of the court on this the 21st day of April 2026.

By order of the court
SHERISTEDAR, Additional Civil Judge Doddaballapur.

Sri. Mahesh.S. Advocate, Court Road, Doddaballapur-561 203.

DISTRICT CULTURAL CELEBRATION

Gadag to celebrate Dr Rajkumar birthday event

GADAG

The district administration of Gadag district has announced a grand celebration for the birth anniversary of legendary actor Dr. Rajkumar on April 24 at 11 a.m. at the district administration auditorium hall. The event is being organised jointly by the District Administration, Zilla Panchayat and Information and Public Relations Department.

Legislative Council Speaker Basavaraj Horatti will attend as the chief guest. The programme will be presided over by Law and Parliamentary Affairs Minister and district in-charge minister H. K. Patil.

Several prominent leaders including Basavaraj Bommai, Salim Ahmed, G. S. Patil, P. C. Gaddigowdar, D. R. Patil, C. C. Patil, Dr. Chandru Lamani, S. V. Sankanur, Pradeep Shettar and others will participate as chief guests.

Officials said senior government representatives including Planning Department secretary Ramandeep Chaudhary and Regional Commissioner Janaki K. M. will also attend the programme.

The event will include a special lecture by Basavaraj Managundi, honorary president of the Dr. Rajkumar Fans Association Federation. Cultural performances will feature singing of popular songs from Dr. Rajkumar's films by artists Gowdappa Bommappa and Kala Tondwari A.

District officials including Deputy Commissioner C. N. Sridhar and Superintendent of Police Rohan Jagadish have extended invitations to the public.

The celebration aims to honour the life and contribution of Dr. Rajkumar, whose films and songs continue to inspire generations across Karnataka.

Pachpadra refinery fire: High-level probe launched

A major fire at the Pachpadra Refinery in Rajasthan has prompted Chief Minister Bhajanlal Sharma to schedule an inspection visit, while the planned inauguration by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been postponed

JAIPUR

Authorities have launched a detailed investigation into the incident, even as officials confirm that no casualties were reported and the situation is under control.

The fire broke out on Monday at the Pachpadra Refinery site in the Balotra district, sending panic across the facility just a day before its scheduled inauguration. Chief Minister Bhajanlal Sharma is set to arrive at the site on Tuesday afternoon to assess the damage and review safety measures, particularly around the Crude Distillation Unit where the incident originated.

According to officials, the blaze was swiftly contained due to coordinated efforts by Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) teams and the state administration. Emergency response units acted promptly to bring the situation under control, ensuring that the fire did not spread to other sections of the refinery. Authorities confirmed that no injuries or loss of life occurred during the incident.

HPCL stated that all units of the refinery remain structurally safe despite the fire. In its preliminary findings, the company indicated that the blaze may have been triggered by a hydrocarbon leak from a valve flange within the heat exchanger circuit in the Crude Distillation Unit.

Following the incident, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's planned visit to inaugurate the refinery has been postponed as a precautionary measure. The delay comes amid heightened concerns over industrial safety and operational readiness.

The Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas has constituted a high-level committee comprising external experts to investigate the root cause of the fire. The committee will also recommend urgent remedial actions to prevent similar incidents in the future.

In an official statement, the Ministry reiterated that swift action by HPCL and state authorities helped avert a larger disaster. The government has emphasized its commitment to ensuring safety and accountability as the investigation progresses.

Armed robbers loot jewellery, cash in midnight heist in Bihar

VAISHALI

In a shocking late-night robbery, a group of armed criminals stormed the residence of a jewellery shop owner in Bihar's Vaishali district, escaping with gold ornaments and cash after creating panic in the neighborhood

The daring heist took place around 12:30 a.m. on Tuesday in Khanpur village, which falls under the jurisdiction of the Mahnar police station. According to police officials, nearly six armed robbers targeted the house of Ranjit Kumar Shah, a local jewellery shop owner, and looted more than 50 grams of gold ornaments along with an undisclosed amount of cash.

The attackers reportedly entered the premises by climbing over the boundary wall and forcibly cutting through the main gate. As the gang began breaking into the house, family members raised an alarm, prompting nearby residents to gather outside. However, none of the locals attempted to intervene due to the presence of weapons carried by the robbers.

To further intimidate residents and prevent resistance, the criminals detonated a crude bomb during the incident. The explosion created panic in the area, allowing the gang to continue their operation uninterrupted. The robbers reportedly spent nearly 30 minutes inside the house, searching thoroughly before fleeing with valuables.

Ranjit Kumar Shah alleged that despite immediately informing the police, officers arrived at the scene only around 3 a.m., by which time the culprits had already escaped. He also stated that the robbers assaulted family members during the attack, leaving his son injured.

Confirming the incident, Mahnar Sub-Divisional Police Officer Praveen Kumar said that a forensic team has been deployed to collect evidence from the crime scene. He added that CCTV footage from the surrounding areas is being examined to identify the suspects. Notably, the robbers failed to take the DVR, which is expected to play a crucial role in the investigation.

Police officials suspect possible involvement of local individuals and have assured that the case will be solved soon, with efforts underway to track down and arrest the accused.

Explosion damages Cong worker's house in Murshidabad

KOLKATA

According to police officials, the incident occurred in Murshidabad, a district considered politically sensitive during election periods. The blast caused significant damage to the roof of the residence, but fortunately, no injuries or casualties were reported.

Authorities said the explosion took place early in the morning, catching residents in the area off guard. The house reportedly belongs to a local worker associated with the Indian National Congress.

While the exact cause of the blast is yet to be determined, initial reports suggest the use of explosive material.

Police teams rushed to the spot soon after receiving information and have begun an investigation into the incident. Security has been heightened in the area, and forensic experts are expected to examine the site to gather crucial evidence.

The explosion comes at a time when political tensions are running high in West Bengal ahead of the Assembly elections.

Incidents like these raise concerns about the safety of party workers and the potential for violence during the electoral process.

Officials have assured that strict action will be taken against those responsible once identified.

Meanwhile, local residents remain anxious, urging authorities to ensure peace and security in the region during the crucial election period. Further details are awaited as the investigation progresses.

SIT QUESTIONS FORMER TDB CHIEF AGAIN

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

In Thiruvananthapuram, the Special Investigation Team (SIT) probing the controversial removal of gold-plated panels from Sabarimala Temple in 2025 has intensified its enquiry. The probe has gained momentum as investigators question key figures and examine procedural lapses that have triggered political and administrative scrutiny.The SIT, appointed by the Kerala High Court, is preparing to submit its comprehensive report. Former Devaswom Board president P.S. Prasanth has been questioned for the third time, while former board member Ajikumar has also been interrogated.

Investigators are focusing on how the gold panels were handed over to the temple's tantri without prior approval from the High Court, a move flagged as a violation of established norms. The controversy had earlier escalated, leading Prasanth to issue an apology before the court.

The SIT has recorded statements from officials involved in transporting the panels on September 7, 2025, both at Sannidhanam and Thiruvananthapuram. Attention has also shifted to the Thiruvabharanam Commissioner, whose statement is expected to be crucial.

Shah promises better deal for north Bengal hills if BJP romp home

KOLKATA

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Tuesday asserted that a permanent political solution for the long-standing issues in the hill regions of North Bengal would be achieved within a month if the Bharatiya Janata Party comes to power in the upcoming state Assembly elections.

Addressing a gathering, Amit Shah said that the regions of Darjeeling, Kalimpong, and Kurseong, which have historically witnessed political unrest and demands for autonomy, would finally see a lasting resolution under a BJP-led government in West Bengal.

He emphasized that the party is committed to addressing the aspirations of the people living in these hill areas, where demands for a separate administrative setup have persisted for decades. According to Shah, previous governments have failed to provide a stable and satisfactory solution, resulting in repeated agitations and disruptions in the region.

Shah further stated that the BJP has a clear roadmap to bring peace, development, and political stability to the hills. He assured that all stakeholders would be taken into confidence and that the solution would be implemented swiftly, within a month of the party assuming power in the state.

The hill regions of Darjeeling, Kalimpong, and Kurseong are strategically and culturally significant, but have often been affected by strikes, protests, and political movements seeking greater autonomy. These developments have impacted tourism, the local economy, and daily life for residents.

The statement by Amit Shah is being seen as a major political promise ahead of the Assembly elections in West Bengal, where the BJP is aiming to expand its influence and challenge the ruling party.

New Bihar CM heads to Delhi to meet PM Modi

PATNA

After assuming office as the new Chief Minister of Bihar, Samrat Choudhary on Tuesday flew to New Delhi to meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The Chief Minister is scheduled to meet the Prime Minister at around 4 p.m. This will be a courtesy meeting following Samrat Choudhary's swearing-in and the formation of the new NDA government in the state.

Sources said that the two leaders are expected to discuss the current situation in Bihar and strategies to accelerate the state's development. The meeting is also likely to focus on governance, Centre-State coordination, and the implementation of key development schemes. Notably, this marks the first time that a leader from the BJP's quota has assumed the office of Chief Minister in Bihar, making the meeting significant on multiple fronts.

Meanwhile, shortly after the swearing-in ceremony, Prime Minister Modi congratulated had Choudhary and expressed confidence in his leadership.

In a post on 'X', PM Modi highlighted Choudhary's energy, commitment to public service, and grassroots experience, stating that these qualities would play a crucial role in Bihar's progress.

He also expressed confidence that the state would achieve new milestones under his leadership.

Since taking the oath, Chief Minister Choudhary has been in action mode and has already conducted several review meetings.

On the second day after his swearing-in, he visited Takht Sri Harmandir Ji Patna Sahib, where he offered prayers for peace, harmony, and prosperity in the state. During the visit, the Gurudwara Management Committee honoured him with a ceremonial sword, a stole, and a Saropa (robe of honour). The Bharatiya Janata Party Mahila Morcha organised a 'Jan Akrosh Mahila Sammelan' in Patna to express support for the Women's Reservation Amendment Bill.

Addressing the gathering, Choudhary issued a strong warning against crimes against women, stating that offenders would not be spared.

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No.KSDB/EE/No 1.div/S.T/PB/IFT-01/2026-27/29 Date:18.04.2026

ಅಲ್ಪಾವಧಿ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ (ಕೆ.ಪಿ.ಪಿ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ಮೂಲಕ)

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಕೊಳಗೇರಿ ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಮಂಡಳಿ, 1ನೇ ವಿಭಾಗ, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ವ್ಯಾಪ್ತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ 01 ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗೆ ಕೆಪಿಪಿ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ಮೂಲಕ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಅಹ್ವಾನಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ, ಸದರಿ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಯ ಇಂಡೆಂಟ್ ನಂಬರ್ ಈ ಕೆಳಕಂಡಂತಿರುತ್ತದೆ.

01. KSDB/2026-27/SE0021

1. Last date & time for receipt of Tenders: **Dt: 08.05.2026 upto 05.30 PM**
2. Date & Time for opening of Technical Bid Date:-**11.05.2026 at 11.00 AM.**

ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ವಿವರಗಳಿಗೆ ಕಾರ್ಯಪಾಲಕ ಅಭಿಯಂತರರು, 1ನೇ ವಿಭಾಗ, ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಕೊಳಗೇರಿ ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಮಂಡಳಿ, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಅಥವಾ https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in ನಲ್ಲಿ ಪಡೆಯಬಹುದಾಗಿದೆ.

ಸಹಿ/–
ಕಾರ್ಯಪಾಲಕ ಅಭಿಯಂತರರು,
ನಂ.1ನೇ ವಿಭಾಗ, ಕಕೊಅಮ, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು

DIPR/CP/277/NR/2026-27

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT,
DIVISION, CHITRADURGA

No.EE:PWD:CTA:AE-2:Tender-04:2026-27 Dated:- 21.04.2026

SHOR TERM E-TENDER NOTIFICATION

Tenders are invited from registered Contractors in KPWD for the following work through KPPP Portal as per standard tender documents rules.

Name of work:- Two cover System:- Head of Account 3054-04-337-1-10-200 MDR Maintenance:- (1) IMPROVEMENTS AND ASPHALTING OF ROAD FROM KALKERE CONNECTING MALLENAHALLI CROSS VIA BALLALASAMUDRA, ALAGHATTA, MALLENAHALLI LINK FROM ALAGHATTA CONNECTING VADDARAHATTI CH 0.00 TO 2.55 KM (KADUR TALUK BORDER) IN HOSADURGA TALUK (W.I. 34940)/call-3

Estimate Cost Rs. in Lakhs:-120.00

Tender dates are as mentioned below: Late Date & time for Tender Queries/ Clarifications 27-04-2026 Time: 17.30
Last Date & time for receipt of tenders 28-04-2026 Time: 16.00
Date & time for opening of Technical Bid 29-04-2026 Time: 16.15
Date & time for opening of Financial Bid 02-05-2026 Time: 11.00
Further details can be obtained from this office and H.P. Company helpline Numbers 080-25501216 and 080-25501227.

DIPR/CTA/KSMCA/51/2026-27

Sd/- Executive Engineer PWD, Chitradurga.

KARNATAKA STATE POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD
Parisara Bhavana, No.49, Church Street, Bangalore-560001
Phone : 080-25581383, Fax : 080-25586321

TENDER No.PCB/AQMC/KMERC/4/2026/180 Dated: 16/04/2026

NOTICE INVITING TENDER
TWO ELECTRONIC TENDER DOCUMENT SYSTEM
(through Gok e-procurement platform https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in)
SECTION I. Invitation for Tender (IFT):

The Member Secretary (purchaser), Karnataka State Pollution Control Board (KSPCB) invites tender from eligible tenderers for supply, installation, commissioning of 12 Nos Continuous Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Stations (CAAQMS), display board to display the data at sites as per CPCB AQI and comprehensive annual maintenance contract for CAAQMS (including insurance, electricity, internet, repairs, spares and consumables) to the Karnataka state pollution control board (KSPCB) under KMERC project. Tenderers are advised to note the qualification criteria specified in Section VII to qualify for the award of the contract.

Description : CAAQMS, **Quantity :**12, **EMD to be paid at E-Portal of GOK. in Rs**. :As per KPPP, **Place of supply:** KSPCB, Regional offices, Tumkur, Chitradurga, Vijayanagar and Bellary.

1) Date of commencement download of tender document from e-portal of Govt of Karnataka : As per the KPPP. 2) Last date for query during pre-bid meeting : As per the KPPP. 3) Last date and time for receipt of tenders : As per the KPPP. 4) Time and date of opening of tenders : As per the KPPP. 5) Place of opening of tenders : Karnataka State Pollution Control Board, Parisara Bhavan, Church Street, Bengaluru-560001.

Sd/-
Member Secretary

DIPR/CP/284/AKAR/2026-27

Our motto is to minimize waste generation through judicious use of natural resources

(Public Works Department)
Office of the Executive Engineer,
PWD Division, Madhugiri

No:EE/PWD/Dvn/AE-1/Tender/2026-27 Dated: 16.04.2026

Invitation For Short term Tender
Tender ref no:02/2026-27

On behalf of Governor of Karnataka, the Executive Engineer, PWD Division, Madhugiri, invites tenders from eligible Tenderers, for the works. (Sira, KOratagere, Madhugiri and Pavagada Taluk) Approx. amount for the work is Rs 80.57Lakhs. Tender documents may be downloaded from the KPPP portal of the Govt. of Karnataka Viz.http://KPPP.gov.in.Tenders must be submitted through KPPP portal on or before 27-04-2026 (up to 4.00 pm), Technical bids will be opened on 28-04-2026 after 4.15 Pm, Financial bid will be opened on 29-04-2026 after 4.15 Pm. Further any other information can be seen from the KPPP portal or can be had from the undersigned.

Sd/- Executive Engineer,
PWD Division, Madhugiri

DIPR/TUM/26/KSMCA/20265-27

MANAPPURAM HOME FINANCE LIMITED
FORMERLY MANAPPURAM HOME FINANCE PVT LTD
CIN : U65923KL2010PLC039179

Regd Office: 8/596 A, Padmaprabha Building, Near Sreerama Swami Temple, Cherppu - Thripryar Road, Thripryar, Thrissur, Kerala 680567 | **Phone No.:** 0487-3520504, **Website:** www.manappuramhomefin.com

POSSESSION NOTICE (For Immovable Property)

Whereas, the undersigned being the authorised officer of **Manappuram Home Finance Ltd ("MAHOFIN")** under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest *[Act], 2002 (54 of 2002) and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with rule 9 of the security interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a **Demand Notice** calling upon the borrowers and co-borrowers to repay the amount mentioned in the notice and Interest thereon within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice. The borrower having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken **Symbolic** possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under section 13(4) of the said *[Act] read with rule 9 of the said rules. The borrower in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of the Manappuram Home Finance Ltd as mentioned below for each of the respective properties:

Sr. No.	Name of Borrower and Co-borrower / Loan account number/ Branch	Description Of Secured Asset In Respect Of Which Interest Has Been Created	Date of Demand Notice sent & Outstanding Amount	Date of Possession
1	Kirankumar V, Chaithra KN, Lakshmamma V, Chethan KN, **/CO10COLONS 000005006092/** Shimoga	All That Piece And Parcel of Residential Vacant Site 9AMeasuring 15.24X6.096Meters = 92.90Sq.meter, Having Its Koralahalli Grama Panchayath Property No. 87/9A, E-Property No. 152400501900120070, Situated In Koralahalli Village, Koralahalli Grama Panchayath, Shivamogga Taluk And District, Karnataka, Pin: 577302. East-Road, West-Site No. 11, South-Site No. 9B, North-Site No. 8-B	09-01-2026 & Rs.310041/-	18-04-2026

Date: 22nd April 2026 | Place: KARNATAKA **Sd/- Authorised Officer Manappuram Home Finance Ltd**

BENGALURU SMART INFRASTRUCTURE LIMITED
Office of the Chief Engineer-02,
No.30/1, UNI Building, 3rd Floor, Thimmaiah Road,
Millar Tank Bund Area, Bengaluru-560052.

No: BSMILE/CE-02/TEND/01/2026-27 Date: 21.04.2026

INVITATION FOR SHORT TERM TENDER (IFT) (Two cover system)

(Through GOK KPP Portal https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in only)

The Government of Karnataka has constituted **"Bengaluru Smart Infrastructure Limited" (B-SMILE)** for implementation of Specific Infrastructure works in the city of Bengaluru. On behalf of the Bengaluru Smart Infrastructure Limited (B- SMILE), The Chief Engineer-02 invites proposals from Detail Project Preparation/ Project Management Consultants who have relevant experience in doing works of similar nature for Detail Project Preparation/ Project Management Consultants from registered firms/ agencies/ Individuals for the works detailed in the table below:

Sl. No.	Name of Work
1	Consultancy services for assisting in preparation of Detailed Project Report (DPR) including investigations such as Topographical survey, Bituminous Core Cutting (Thickness), Subgrade Bearing Capacity (CBR), Falling weight Deflectometer (FWD) for the Comprehensive Development of Roads by providing White Topping in Bengaluru Central City Corporation Zone-1 limits in Bengaluru City for the year 2026-27. Amount put to Tender (in Rs. Lakhs): **9.60.** Earnest Money Deposit @ 1% of APT (In Rs): **9600.**
2	Consultancy services for assisting in preparation of Detailed Project Report (DPR) including investigations such as Topographical survey, Bituminous Core Cutting (Thickness), Subgrade Bearing Capacity (CBR), Falling weight Deflectometer (FWD) for the Comprehensive Development of Roads by providing White Topping in Bengaluru Central City Corporation Zone-2 limits in Bengaluru City for the year 2026-27. Amount put to Tender (in Rs. Lakhs): **9.90.** Earnest Money Deposit @ 1% of APT (In Rs): **9900.**
3	Consultancy services for assisting in preparation of Detailed Project Report (DPR) including investigations such as Topographical survey, Bituminous Core Cutting (Thickness), Subgrade Bearing Capacity (CBR), Falling weight Deflectometer (FWD) for the Comprehensive Development of Roads by providing White Topping in Bengaluru East City Corporation Zone-1 limits in Bengaluru City for the year 2026-27. Amount put to Tender (in Rs. Lakhs): **16.40.** Earnest Money Deposit @ 1% of APT (In Rs): **16400.**
4	Consultancy services for assisting in preparation of Detailed Project Report (DPR) including investigations such as Topographical survey, Bituminous Core Cutting (Thickness), Subgrade Bearing Capacity (CBR), Falling weight Deflectometer (FWD) for the Comprehensive Development of Roads by providing White Topping in Bengaluru East City Corporation Zone-2 limits in Bengaluru City for the year 2026-27. Amount put to Tender (in Rs. Lakhs): **7.30.** Earnest Money Deposit @ 1% of APT (In Rs): **7300.**

Calendar of events: (1) Availability of Tender documents: **22.04.2026, 16.30 hours onwards. (2)** Pre bid meeting: **28.04.2026, 16.00 hours. (3)** Last Date & Time for receipt of tenders: **02.05.2026, 16.00 hours. (4)** Date & Time for Opening of Technical Bid: **04.05.2026, 10.30 hours. (5)** Date & Time for Opening of Financial Bid: **Will be intimated after obtaining approval for Technical Evaluation.**

Sd/- Chief Engineer-2
Bengaluru Smart Infrastructure Limited

CH CLASSIFIEDS
To place a classified ad contact: **080-41209042**

Shankaracharya's wisdom serves as guiding light for humanity: PM

'Guru's teachings promote harmony, discipline, and a sense of unity among all beings'

NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday paid homage to Adi Shankaracharya on his Jayanti, highlighting the enduring relevance of his teachings on Advaita Vedanta and their profound influence on spiritual thought and human values.

Taking to the social media platform X, Narendra Modi remembered Adi Shankaracharya as one of India's greatest spiritual luminaries whose philosophy continues to guide millions across the world. He emphasized that the doctrine of Advaita Vedanta, which teaches the oneness of existence, remains deeply relevant in today's world. The Prime Minister noted that Shankaracharya's teachings promote harmony, discipline, and a sense of unity among all beings.

Modi also highlighted the philosopher's efforts in revitalising spiritual thought across India, stating that his work continues to inspire people to follow the path of truth, compassion, and collective well-being. He added that Adi Shankaracharya's wisdom serves as a guiding light for humanity even in modern times.

Adi Shankaracharya, widely regarded as a towering figure in Indian philosophy, played a pivotal role in consolidating the principles of Advaita Vedanta within Hindu thought. Born in Kalady, he renounced worldly life at a young age and became a sanyasi. He is believed to have attained spiritual enlightenment early in his life.

He authored influential commentaries on key Hindu scriptures such as the Upanishads, the Bhagavad Gita, and the Brahma Sutras, which continue to be studied and revered by scholars and practitioners alike. His work laid the foundation for a unified philosophical framework that emphasizes the unity of the individual soul with universal consciousness.

Adi Shankaracharya also established four major monastic centres across India to promote spiritual learning and preserve tradition. These include centres in Sringeri in the south, Dwarka in the west, Puri in the east, and Jyotirmath in the north.

Earlier in the day, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath also paid tribute to the revered spiritual leader, acknowledging his immense contributions to Indian philosophy and culture.

Rahul's 'Nitish compromised' remark kicks up political storm

NEW DELHI

Bihar Deputy Chief Minister Vijay Kumar Chaudhary questioned the intent and coherence of Gandhi's remarks

The sharp reactions from NDA leaders came after Rahul Gandhi's remarks during a rally in Thoothukudi, where he alleged that Nitish Kumar had been "compromised" and claimed that the Bharatiya Janata Party had exerted control over him. Gandhi also suggested that Nitish Kumar's political standing weakened following his resignation as Chief Minister and subsequent move to the Rajya Sabha.

Responding to the criticism, Bihar Deputy Chief Minister Vijay Kumar Chaudhary questioned the intent and coherence of Gandhi's remarks. He said that Rahul Gandhi's statements often lack clarity and are difficult for the public to interpret. Chaudhary further alleged that Gandhi does not demonstrate seriousness in politics and fails to adhere to the standards of parliamentary decorum.

In a separate response, Bihar Minister Ram Kripal Yadav dismissed Gandhi's allegation that Nitish Kumar resigned under pressure from the BJP. He stated that such claims reflect the mindset of the Congress Party, which he accused of having a history of exerting pressure for political gains. Yadav asserted that Nitish Kumar made his decisions independently and without any external influence. The exchange marks a fresh escalation in political tensions between the ruling NDA and the opposition Congress party. Bihar's political landscape has remained highly dynamic in recent years, with shifting alliances and leadership changes often becoming subjects of national debate.

Political observers note that such confrontations are likely to intensify as parties gear up for upcoming electoral battles, with leaders from both sides sharpening their rhetoric to consolidate support among voters.

QUICK READ

'RBI in wait and watch mode amid West Asia crisis'

New Delhi

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is closely monitoring the fallout from the West Asia conflict and will not make firm commitments on the future path of interest rates, Governor Sanjay Malhotra has said, adding that prolonged supply disruptions risk embedding inflation into India's broader price level. In his speech at Princeton University in the US, Malhotra said the ongoing conflict poses a direct threat to the Indian economy given the region's outsized role in the country's trade. Moreover, West Asia accounts for roughly one-sixth of India's exports, one-fifth of its imports, half of its crude oil imports, two-fifths of its fertiliser imports, and nearly two-fifths of inward remittances.

PM Modi greets civil servants on Civil Services Day

New Delhi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday extended greetings to all civil servants on Civil Services Day and wished that they would continue to serve the nation with excellence, compassion and innovation, upholding the highest standards of duty. PM Modi took to social media 'X' and said, Greetings to all civil servants on Civil Services Day. This is an occasion to further strengthen the resolve to work towards good governance and nation building. From the grassroots to policy-making, the efforts of civil servants touch countless lives and contribute to India's progress. May our civil servants continue to serve with excellence, compassion and innovation, upholding the highest standards of duty, he said.

He claims TVK stands firmly for unity, inclusiveness, and the welfare of all sections of society

Vijay urges voters to back TVK, targets DMK

CHENNAI

In a detailed statement addressed to the people of the state, Vijay expressed deep gratitude for the overwhelming love and encouragement he has received since stepping into politics.

He acknowledged that his journey has not been easy, describing it as one filled with unimaginable challenges, restrictions and pain. Despite these hurdles, he said the consistent support from the public has kept him motivated and committed to his political mission.

Sharpening his attack on political rivals, Vijay criticised the ruling Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK), calling it a people-opposing force. He also accused the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) of promoting divisive politics and ideologies that, according to him, threaten social harmony. Positioning his party as a people-centric alternative, Vijay said TVK stands firmly for unity, inclusiveness, and the welfare of all sections of society.

Vijay further asserted that he would not succumb to pressure from what he described as fascist forces or corporate entities attempting to influence political outcomes. He emphasised that intimidation or coercion would not weaken the bond he shares with the people of Tamil Nadu. No force in the world can separate us, he said, expressing confidence in the collective strength of the people.

Highlighting the rise of TVK, Vijay credited divine grace, as well as the support of women and youth, for transforming the party into a growing political force in the state. He noted that his entry into politics was not backed by traditional political structures or powerful networks but was instead driven by grassroots support from ordinary citizens.

He also issued a warning to voters against opportunistic politicians who, he claimed, enter public life for personal gain while compromising the future of younger generations. Vijay urged voters to remain vigilant and reject such forces, stating that supporting them would indirectly strengthen divisive elements.

As Tamil Nadu prepares for the April 23 Assembly elections, Vijay's message underscores an intensified campaign effort by TVK to mobilise voters and establish itself as a credible alternative in the state's evolving political landscape.

Support DMK to protect TN's rights, culture, growth: Stalin

CHENNAI

Chief Minister M.K. Stalin, on Tuesday made a final appeal to voters as the high-voltage campaigning for the Tamil Nadu Assembly elections comes to an end this evening, urging people to back the DMK-led alliance to secure the state's future. With polling scheduled for April 23, the Election Commission has also enforced a ban on the publication of opinion polls during the silence period. A total of 4,023 candidates are contesting across 234 constituencies, setting the stage for a tightly fought four-cornered contest involving the DMK, AIADMK, Naam Tamilar Katchi, and other parties. Despite intense summer heat across the state, political activity has remained brisk, with leaders and candidates engaging in rallies, roadshows, and door-to-door campaigns to reach voters.

Stalin has led the DMK's campaign with an extensive statewide tour, canvassing support for party nominees and alliance partners. As campaigning is drawing to a close, he released a video message on social media platform X, underlining his government's achievements and cautioning against forces that he said aim to derail Tamil Nadu's progress.

In the video, Stalin struck an emotional note, saying his bond with Tamil Nadu and its people is rooted in deep responsibility. When people call me more dangerous than my father, I see it as a reminder that I am a threat to those who wish to betray Tamil Nadu or obstruct its development, he said.

7 districts under ECI's special security scanner

KOLKATA

As Kolkata prepares for the first phase of the West Bengal Assembly elections on April 23, covering 152 constituencies across 16 districts, the Election Commission of India (ECI) has flagged seven districts as highly sensitive due to security concerns. These include Malda, Murshidabad, North Dinajpur, and Cooch Behar in North Bengal, along with Birbhum, West Midnapore, and West Burdwan in South Bengal.

These districts were identified based on past records of electoral violence and booth sensitivity over the last 15 years. As a result, they will see the highest deployment of central forces and Quick Response Teams (QRTs) on polling day. Most polling booths in these regions have been classified as critical or hypersensitive. To ensure peaceful voting, the ECI has deployed 2,193 QRTs across all constituencies in this phase. Murshidabad alone will have 219 QRTs, the highest among all districts. Each team will primarily consist of Central Armed Police Forces personnel.

Additionally, a two-step voter verification system will be enforced at every polling booth to prevent malpractice and ensure secure elections.

India Semiconductor Mission 'ISM 2.0' likely by May

NEW DELHI

The government is preparing to roll out an expanded version of the India Semiconductor Mission 'ISM 2.0' likely by May, with a proposed outlay ranging between Rs 1 lakh crore and Rs 1.2 lakh crore. According to the NDTV Profit report, inter-ministerial consultations are currently underway, while the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) is awaiting final approval from the Finance Ministry. The proposed allocation is significantly higher than the Rs 76,000 crore earmarked for the first phase of the semiconductor mission, said the report, citing sources. Under ISM 2.0, the government aims to widen the scope of the programme beyond chip fabrication and design to include support for semiconductor equipment, raw materials and other critical inputs.

Maha thwarts 13 child marriages on Akshaya Tritiya

MUMBAI

The Maharashtra Department of Women and Child Development on Tuesday said that a series of preventive measures implemented on the occasion of Akshaya Tritiya led to the successful prevention of 13 child marriages across the state.

The department said that special arrangements for online coordination and guidance were put in place under the chairmanship of Meghna Bordikar, Minister of State for Women and Child Development in Maharashtra, to ensure swift action and monitoring.

Given that Akshaya Tritiya is considered one of the most auspicious days in the Hindu calendar and often witnesses a rise in weddings and mass marriage ceremonies, the department had stepped up vigilance in advance, anticipating a possible increase in instances of child marriage.

To address the concern, an online review meeting was convened under Bordikar's leadership, attended by senior officials, including the Secretary of the department, the Commissioner, District Collectors, and Superintendents of Police. During the meeting, all agencies were directed to remain alert and to take strict measures to prevent any such incidents.

Officials said that a comprehensive awareness campaign was carried out at the district, taluka and village levels across Maharashtra. Through District Child Protection Units, Child Helpline 1098, Anganwadi workers, Village Child Protection Committees and various organisations working in the field of child welfare, citizens were informed about the harmful consequences of child marriage.

The campaign included a range of outreach activities such as kirtans, Bhagwat recitations, street plays, awareness rallies, posters and stickers. Authorities also encouraged households to take pledges against child marriage to ensure wider community participation.

As part of deterrent measures, the administration warned that criminal cases could be registered within 24 hours against marriage hall owners, priests, musical troupes and relatives involved in facilitating child marriages.

SPIRITUAL JOURNEY

Char Dham Yatra 2026 off to a devotional start

RUDRAPYRAG

A wave of devotion and enthusiasm has swept across the region, with pilgrims arriving in large numbers from across India and abroad to undertake the revered journey.

The yatra, considered one of the most important spiritual pilgrimages in Hinduism, began earlier with the opening of Gangotri Temple and Yamunotri Temple on the auspicious occasion of Akshaya Tritiya, following a six-month winter closure.

Amid chants of Vedic hymns and traditional rituals, temple doors were opened, ushering in a new pilgrimage season expected to attract lakhs of devotees.

Traditionally, the pilgrimage follows a west-to-east sequence, beginning at Yamunotri, followed by Gangotri, then Kedarnath, and concluding at Badrinath. Authorities have undertaken extensive preparations to ensure a smooth and safe experience for pilgrims.

Measures for security, traffic regulation, and healthcare have been strengthened, while facilities such as sanitation, parking, and accommodation have been upgraded along the routes.

Both online and offline registration systems are currently in place to manage the large influx of visitors. Security personnel, along with State Disaster Response Force teams, have been deployed at key points with a strong focus on disaster preparedness. Helplines and control rooms have also been activated to assist pilgrims and respond to emergencies.

The opening date of Kedarnath is traditionally decided by the Char Dham Temple Committee at the Omkareshwar Temple on the occasion of Maha Shivratri, which was observed on February 15 this year.

The ceremonial opening of Kedarnath is marked by grand rituals. A day before the temple opens, the sacred palanquin carrying the deity is taken in a procession from Gaurikund to the temple, covering a challenging 16-kilometre trek. Priests perform elaborate Vedic rituals before unveiling the idol of Bhagwan Kedarnath for darshan.

With spiritual fervour at its peak and robust arrangements in place, the Char Dham Yatra 2026 has begun on a vibrant and devotional note, drawing thousands of devotees seeking blessings and spiritual solace.

Journey to the abode of the divine

- The Char Dham Yatra encompasses four sacred shrines—Yamunotri, Gangotri, Kedarnath, and Badrinath—each nestled in the majestic Himalayas of Uttarakhand
- The temples are open only for six months due to heavy winter snow, generally closing in October/November and opening in April/May.
- The Yatra is traditionally completed in a clockwise direction, starting from West to East: Yamunotri, Gangotri, Kedarnath, and finally Badrinath.

QUICK READ

UN council slams deadly Lebanon peacekeeper attack

United Nations

The UN Security Council strongly condemned an attack in southern Lebanon that killed a French peacekeeper and injured three others, including two seriously. Members demanded a quick investigation and accountability for those responsible. They said peacekeepers must never be targeted and offered condolences to victims' families and support to France. The Council backed UNIFIL and urged all sides to respect its safety and movement. UN chief Antonio Guterres also condemned the attack, warning such acts may be war crimes and must be punished. This incident highlights rising tensions despite a recent ceasefire agreement in the region.

South Korea slams Japan shrine visit controversy

Seoul

South Korea expressed deep regret after Sanae Takaichi sent a ritual offering to Yasukuni Shrine, a site linked to Japan's wartime past. Lawmakers also visited or planned visits, sparking criticism. Seoul urged Japan to face history with honesty and show true remorse. The shrine honours war dead, including convicted World War II leaders like Hideki Tojo. The move has upset neighbours, including China. Tensions remain sensitive due to Japan's past occupation of Korea and wartime actions across Asia.

Bangladesh family threatened after harassment case filed

Dhaka

A rights group condemned attacks and threats against a teenage survivor's family in Bangladesh after they filed a case against madrasa head Abul Khayer for attempted rape. Manusher Jonno Foundation said the family faced violence, vandalism, and pressure to withdraw the complaint. Reports claimed a large group attacked their home, sparking outrage after a video spread online. The group urged authorities to protect the family, arrest those involved, and ensure justice. It warned that fear and intimidation stop survivors from seeking legal help and weaken trust in the justice system.

INS Sudarshini boosts India Morocco maritime ties

Casablanca

INS Sudarshini completed a successful visit to Casablanca, strengthening maritime ties between India and Morocco. The visit, part of Lokayan 26, included training exchanges, meetings with Moroccan naval leaders, and friendly activities with cadets. Events onboard and official interactions helped deepen professional and cultural relations. The mission highlights cooperation, shared interests, and mutual learning between the two nations. After the visit, the ship sailed for Las Palmas, continuing its journey to spread goodwill and promote global unity through maritime engagement and partnerships.

Leaked secrets spark major S. Korea-US rift

A major diplomatic row erupted in Seoul over claims that a top official leaked classified American intelligence regarding N. Korea.

SEOUL

A major diplomatic row has erupted in Seoul following claims that a top South Korean official leaked classified American intelligence.

General Xavier Brunson, commander of U.S. forces in South Korea, reportedly filed a formal protest after sensitive details about North Korea's nuclear program were made public.

The controversy centers on Unification Minister Chung Dong-young. During a recent government meeting, Chung named "Kusong" as a secret location for North Korea's uranium enrichment. Previously, only two other sites were officially known to the public. While Chung claims

he was using "open information," critics argue he revealed secrets shared privately by Washington.

The fallout has been immediate. Sources say the U.S. has already started pulling back, placing new limits on the satellite intelligence it shares with South Korea. This "intelligence freeze" specifically targets technology used to track North Korean nuclear movements.

Local lawmakers are now calling for Chung to resign, arguing his "loose lips" have damaged the vital alliance between the two nations. "A minister who causes such a rift should not stay in office," stated Rep. Sung Il-jong, head of the national defense committee.

However, the story has two sides. South Korea's Defense Ministry denied that any formal protest took place, calling the reports "not true" and inappropriate. They insist that the military partnership remains strong and that both countries are still following their intelligence-sharing rules. For now, the U.S. military is staying quiet, refusing to confirm or deny the brewing tension.

India-Germany strengthen bold defense ties

BERLIN

Defense Minister Rajnath Singh arrived in Germany, marking a pivotal moment for international security. This visit is the first by an Indian defense leader in seven years, signaling a fresh chapter in the strategic partnership between the two democratic powerhouses.

The mission focuses on moving beyond simple buyer-seller relationships. Instead, Singh and German Defense Minister Boris Pistorius aim to sign a Defense Industrial Cooperation Roadmap. This plan encourages German companies to develop and build high-tech military hardware directly in India under the "Make-in-India" initiative.

Rajnath Singh visited Germany to launch a new defense industrial roadmap, prioritizing hi-tech co-production and military cooperation between the two nations.

Key areas of discussion include:

- Next-Gen Tech: Joint work on artificial intelligence, drones, and cybersecurity.
- Global Peace: New agreements for training United Nations peacekeepers.
- Military Ties: Increasing joint exercises and high-level engagement.

"The visit is significant for advancing industrial collaboration and emerging tech," the Indian Embassy shared. By focusing on co-production, India hopes to gain access to Germany's world-class engineering, while Germany secures a key ally in the Indo-Pacific region.

This meeting builds on momentum from last year when Pistorius visited New Delhi. Both nations emphasize a "rules-based international order," suggesting that this alliance is about more than just hardware, it is about regional stability. Singh is also scheduled to meet with top German industry CEOs to pitch India as a global manufacturing hub. The outcome of these talks could define the defense landscape for both nations for years to come.

India-UK deepen military co-op for future

LONDON: India and the United Kingdom have agreed to deepen military cooperation during a visit by Chief of Defence Staff General Anil Chauhan. This is the first official UK trip by an Indian CDS. Talks focused on closer military ties and new age warfare areas such as cyber security, space, and intelligence sharing. Both sides said future conflicts will rely more on technology, and forces must be ready for fast changing threats. They also discussed a defence industrial roadmap to co develop equipment. Leaders highlighted the importance of the Indo Pacific region and the need to keep it stable and secure. General Chauhan met ministers and experts, and held discussions on modernising India's armed forces. The three day visit included events and meetings with industry leaders. The two nations are expected to expand joint exercises and share more information, aiming to build stronger, reliable security for the future.

Japan changes rules to sell powerful weapons

TOKYO

Japan has officially changed its laws to allow the sale of lethal weapons to other countries.

This major update marks a massive shift in how the nation handles its military equipment. For decades, Japan followed strict rules that only allowed the export of non-combat gear, like rescue tools and transport vehicles.

Under the new guidelines, the government is scrapping those old limits. Instead of just five specific categories, equipment is now divided into "weapons" and "non-weapons." This means Japan can now export high-powered gear, including

missiles and destroyers, to countries that have signed security agreements. While the government says it won't sell to nations currently at war, "special circumstances" could allow exceptions if Japan's own security is at stake.

The decision has sparked anger across the country. Many citizens are worried that this moves Japan away from the "peace-loving" identity it adopted after World War II. Protesters gathered in Tokyo this week, holding signs calling the move a "rejection of peace" and chanting slogans to avoid repeating past mistakes.

One of the biggest complaints from opposition leaders is that these sales no longer require approval from Parliament. Instead, a small security council will make the final calls in private. This change happened on the same day as a controversial festival at a local war shrine, adding more tension to the debate. Critics fear that without more oversight, Japan risks becoming a "merchant of death" and fueling conflicts around the world.

Beijing-Delhi skies connect again with direct flight

BEIJING

Travel between India and China is becoming easier as direct flights resume. Air China has relaunched its Beijing–Delhi service, operating three times weekly on Tuesdays, Fridays, and Sundays using an Airbus A330. Flights depart Beijing in the afternoon and arrive in Delhi by 8:20 PM, with one-way economy fares starting around $523. This follows China Eastern Airlines restarting its Kunming–Kolkata route. Meanwhile, IndiGo has introduced daily Kolkata–Shanghai flights with fuel-efficient aircraft. These developments come after years of disruption due to the pandemic and border tensions. Alongside improved connectivity, India has eased investment rules to support startups, aiming to boost business ties and strengthen economic cooperation between the two nations.

Gold mining sparking legal wars in Punjab

ISLAMABAD

A major row has broken out in Pakistan's Punjab province as local landowners face criminal charges for allegedly blocking gold extraction in the Attock region. While the government is eager to tap into the area's mineral wealth, critics say ordinary citizens are being punished instead of protected.

The controversy reached the Provincial Assembly this week, led by opposition leader Qazi Ahmed Akbar. He argued that instead of receiving royalties for the gold found on their property, landowners are being booked by police for "obstructing official work." Akbar demanded transparency, asking the government to reveal exactly how much revenue the gold has generated and why that money isn't reaching the locals.

In response, Punjab's Minister for Mines and Minerals, Sher Ali Gorchani, defended the project. He insisted the province's assets belong to all its people and promised to share the "ground realities" soon. He also used the moment to attack the opposition, claiming the government is preventing the "looting and plunder" seen in other regions.

The debate turned personal and tense when opposition members sarcastically accused the government leadership of corruption. Despite the heated words, officials told the House that the mining department has already funneled billions into the provincial treasury. For the landowners in Attock, however, the "gold rush" has so far brought more legal trouble than wealth, leaving the community caught between high-value mining and their own land rights.

Pak delays bypass project for 17th year

ISLAMABAD

Pakistan's federal government has once again pushed back the completion of the Peshawar Northern Bypass, a road project that has been in limbo for 17 years. Despite an offer from the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) province to provide Rs 4 billion in immediate "bridge financing" to speed up the work, the Centre says the project will miss its June deadline.

The 30-km road was designed to complete a vital ring road around Peshawar. However, since it began in 2010, the project has been plagued by slow funding and missed deadlines. Because of these constant delays, the total cost has exploded from an original Rs 3 billion to a staggering Rs 27 billion.

KP Finance Minister Muzzammil Aslam expressed deep frustration after meeting with federal officials. He noted that although the province secured bank guarantees to fund the final stretch, the federal government does not consider the bypass a "priority." Federal officials now suggest the road might not be finished until next September, as they are focusing on 16 other projects instead.

The provincial government warned that the Centre is "dragging its feet" and treating the region unfairly. This tension comes at a difficult time, as KP is already struggling with reduced cash transfers from the federal government, which threatens local services and budget targets set by the IMF. For the people of Peshawar, the long-awaited bypass remains a symbol of broken promises and rising costs.

Another Nepal min faces new financial queries

KATHMANDU

Nepal's young government is facing a fresh wave of controversy as a second cabinet minister comes under fire for alleged misconduct. Just two weeks after the Labor Minister was sacked for nepotism, Home Minister Sudan Gurung is now facing serious questions regarding his personal finances and business ties.

The ruling Rastriya Swatantra Party (RSP) rose to power recently on a platform of transparency and clean politics. However, reports have emerged linking Gurung to investments shared with Deepak Bhatta, a businessman currently being investigated for money laundering. This connection has triggered calls for a deep-dive investigation from within Gurung's own party.

The Home Minister has denied any wrongdoing. He argues that his stock holdings were openly declared and that any confusion is simply a matter of how the assets were categorized. "Someone who intends to hide assets does not openly declare over Rs 20 million in investments," Gurung stated, defending his integrity.

Despite his defense, the pressure is mounting. Critics point out that the previous minister, Deepak Kumar Sah, was dismissed instantly after appointing his wife to a government board. Some party members argue that the allegations against Gurung are even more serious and deserve the same swift action.

The RSP gained massive support from young protesters who were tired of corruption in Nepal. Now, the party faces a difficult test, it must prove to its voters that its promise of "zero tolerance" applies to everyone, regardless of their rank or position in the cabinet.

Shooting at Mexico's Teotihuacan pyramids kills tourist

WASHINGTON DC

A tragic shooting at the historic Teotihuacan pyramids has left a Canadian tourist dead and at least 13 others injured. The incident occurred at the world-famous archaeological site near Mexico City. According to Mexico's security cabinet, an unidentified man opened fire near the Pyramid of the Moon before taking his own life.

The attack turned the ancient "City of the Gods" into a scene of chaos. While some victims were struck by gunfire, others were injured in the desperate rush to escape as shots echoed through the monu-

ments. Eight people remained hospitalized as of recently. Authorities recovered a handgun, a knife, and live ammunition from the scene. Canada's Foreign Ministry confirmed the death of one citizen and noted that another Canadian was among the wounded.

Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum expressed her deep grief over the violence at the UNESCO World Heritage site, which attracts millions of visitors annually. She has ordered a full federal investigation and confirmed that her administration is working closely with the Canadian Embassy to support the victims' families.

Videos on social media captured the terrifying moments as visitors fled the Pyramid of the Moon, a site usually known for its spiritual and historical significance. Federal and state authorities have increased security at the site, which sits about 50 km northeast of Mexico City. As the investigation continues, officials are working with multiple foreign embassies to assist other international tourists caught in the crossfire.

REFORMS NEED OF THE HOUR

India pushes for major UN shake-up

NEW YORK

India is pushing for a major shake-up at the United Nations, demanding more power for developing nations.

During a high-level meeting at the UN headquarters, Indian official Sibi George called for the Global South to have a permanent seat at the table. He argued that the current UN Security Council is outdated and needs to change to stay relevant.

India's message is clear,

the world has changed since the UN was formed, and global institutions must reflect that. George pointed out that India's goals for reform align closely with the African model, which also seeks a stronger voice for its nations.

For years, India has been a vocal critic of the way the Security Council is run, stating that reform is the only way to solve global problems.

During his visit, George met with several top UN leaders to discuss peace missions. India is a massive supporter of UN peacekeeping, sending thousands of troops to help stabilize war-torn areas. Reaffirming this commitment, George highlighted that India remains a leader in global teamwork.

To start his trip, George paid his respects at a statue of Mahatma Gandhi, a symbol of peace. This visit is part of a larger effort by India to ensure that countries from Asia, Africa, and Latin America are no longer ignored. By seeking permanent status, India hopes to lead a movement that makes the UN fairer for everyone, ensuring that the world's most populated regions have a say in global security.

Wolves are relegated after Crystal Palace and West Ham draw

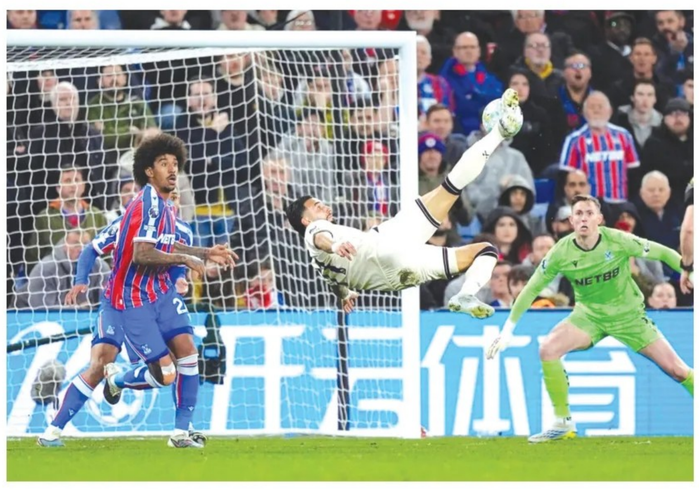
Wolves relegated as West Ham secure vital draw against Crystal Palace

LONDON

Wolverhampton Wanderers were officially relegated from the Premier League after West Ham United held Crystal Palace to a goalless draw in a tense encounter at Selhurst Park, a result that confirmed Wolves cannot mathematically escape the drop with only five matches remaining in the season. The Midlands club, who had endured a consistently poor campaign, will now return to the Championship for the first time since 2018, ending their top-flight stay after a season marked by inconsistency, defensive lapses and missed opportunities in key fixtures.

West Ham's hard-earned point proved crucial in their own battle for survival, lifting them further clear of the relegation zone and strengthening their position heading into the final stretch of the campaign.

The match itself was largely uneventful, with West Ham



marginally stronger in the opening phase while Crystal Palace improved after half-time but failed to create clear chances in front of goal. Both goalkeepers were rarely tested in a match that lacked attacking quality, reflecting the high pressure and caution surrounding teams involved in the relegation fight.

West Ham captain Jarrod Bowen acknowledged the importance of the point, stressing that his side must remain focused on their own performances rather than relying on other results to secure safety.

Crystal Palace extended their inconsistent run on Monday nights but remain comfortably mid-table, with their defensive record still among the better ones outside the top two teams in the league.

Goalkeeper Dean Henderson once again played a key role in securing a clean sheet, marking Palace's 12th shutout of the season, a tally only bettered by Arsenal and Manchester City.

Despite the disappointment of relegation confirmation elsewhere, West Ham players and staff viewed the result as a step forward in their survival push, with momentum now considered crucial in the remaining fixtures.

For Wolves, the confirmation brings an end to months of mounting pressure and underperformance, as they now begin planning for life in the Championship and a potential rebuild ahead of the next season. Club officials are expected to review squad structure, managerial direction and recruitment strategy as they prepare for the financial and sporting implications of relegation in the coming months, while supporters face a difficult transition after years of top-flight football.

Relegation-threatened Lecce halts losing streak with draw against Fiorentina

LECCE

Relegation-threatened Lecce ended their losing streak in Serie A with a crucial 1-1 draw against Fiorentina, earning a valuable point in their fight to stay in Italy's top flight.

Fiorentina appeared on course for victory after English winger Jack Harrison scored his first Serie A goal since joining the club, producing a superb curling finish from the edge of the box midway through the first half.

The on-loan Leeds United forward struck with precision into the far corner, breaking his long wait for a goal in his 18th appearance and giving Fiorentina control of the contest.

Lecce, however, showed resilience despite a difficult run of form that had seen them go 357 minutes without scoring before this fixture.

The hosts created several promising chances, with Walid Cheddira and Lassana Coulibaly both going close, only to be denied by last-ditch Fiorentina defending.

The turning point came in the 71st minute when Tiago

Lecce end losing run with late equaliser against Fiorentina in Serie A clash

Gabriel rose highest to meet an Antonino Gallo corner, directing a glancing header past the goalkeeper to bring Lecce level. The equaliser sparked renewed energy in the home side as they pushed for a winner, though Fiorentina managed to hold firm in the closing stages to secure a share of the points.

Lecce avoided what would have been a fifth consecutive defeat, a result that significantly boosts morale in their relegation battle.

The draw lifts Lecce to 28 points, level with Cremonese, who sit just above the relegation zone, with only the bottom three teams dropping at the end of the season.

Fiorentina, meanwhile, remain in 15th place, eight points clear of danger, and extended their unbeaten league run to six matches despite missing the chance to secure a third straight win.

The result reflects Lecce's fighting spirit as they continue to battle for survival in a tightly contested relegation race, where every point is proving crucial in determining their Serie A future heading into the final stretch of the campaign.

Gheorghe Hagi appointed Romania coach again following Mircea Lucescu's passing

Romania great Gheorghe Hagi returns for second stint as national team coach

BUCHAREST

Romania football legend Gheorghe Hagi has been appointed national team coach for a second spell, stepping in after the death of Mircea Lucescu, who passed away two weeks ago at the age of 80, marking a significant emotional and sporting transition for Romanian football.

The 61-year-old Hagi, widely regarded as the greatest player in Romania's history, returns to international management nearly 25 years after his brief first stint in 2001, when he lasted only three months following an unsuccessful World Cup qualification campaign.

Hagi famously led Romania to the 1994 FIFA World Cup

quarterfinals and enjoyed a stellar playing career featuring spells at top European clubs including Barcelona and Real Madrid, where he was known for his creative vision and technical brilliance.

Since retiring as a player, Hagi has built a respected coaching career at club level, managing teams in Romania and Turkey, including Galatasaray and Steaua Bucharest, earning recognition for his commitment to developing young talent.

Romania currently sit 56th in the FIFA rankings and have already missed out on qualification for the upcoming World Cup in the United States, Canada and Mexico after losing a playoff tie against Turkey.

Following that defeat, former coach Lucescu stepped down due to health issues before his passing earlier this month, leaving the national team in a period of transition and uncertainty. In his official statement, Hagi described his return as both an honour and a major responsibility, emphasising his emotional connection to representing Romania at international level once again.

He expressed optimism about the team's future, stating his belief that strong performances and unity could help Romania rebuild competitiveness on the international stage.

Hagi also said he hopes to translate his success as a player into coaching achievements, signalling ambition to elevate Romania's standing in world football despite recent setbacks.

The Romanian Football Federation has backed his appointment, viewing him as a symbolic and strategic choice to inspire a new generation of players while restoring belief within the national setup.

Soccer player Dos Santos signs first pro deal after surviving fatal bar fire

METZ

Tahirys Dos Santos has signed his first professional contract with Ligue 1 club Metz following his remarkable recovery from the devastating bar fire in Switzerland that occurred on New Year's Day.

The 19-year-old defender, who suffered severe burns and spent weeks in hospital care, returned to action earlier this month with Metz's reserve team in the French fifth division.

His contract marks a major milestone in a journey that nearly ended in tragedy, when a fire broke out at a ski resort bar in Crans-Montana, killing 41 people and injuring more than 100.

Dos Santos has described the experience as life-changing, saying the ordeal made him stronger and more determined to succeed in professional football.

He credited his recovery to medical staff, family support, and his determination to return to the pitch despite the severity of his injuries.

Metz officials praised the young defender, calling him an example of resilience and professionalism both on and off the field.

The club remains bottom of Ligue 1 this season but sees Dos Santos as part of its long-term rebuilding project.

He expressed gratitude for the opportunity, saying signing his first professional deal is the fulfilment of a childhood dream.

Despite the trauma of the incident, Dos Santos said he wants to continue inspiring others who face adversity and hardship.

He also revealed that the moment he decided to turn back into the burning building to rescue his girlfriend remains the most defining act of his life.

Doctors had earlier confirmed that he suffered burns to his back, face, hands and arms and required multiple skin graft surgeries during his recovery period.

His return to professional football has been widely celebrated within the club, with teammates and staff applauding his determination and mental strength throughout rehabilitation.

He now aims to establish himself in Metz's senior squad over the coming seasons as the club plans for future rebuilding.

Club sources say his attitude during recovery impressed coaches, who believe he has the potential to become a key player for the team in the future.

Injured Alcaraz waits on wrist tests as French Open clock ticks

MADRID

Carlos Alcaraz's participation in the French Open is now in serious doubt after the defending two-time champion revealed that a right wrist injury continues to trouble him, with crucial medical tests scheduled in the coming days to determine his fitness for the Grand Slam next month.

The 22-year-old Spaniard, who has already won seven Grand Slam titles, said he remains uncertain about his recovery timeline and admitted that his return to full competition will depend entirely on upcoming scan results and medical assessments.

Alcaraz withdrew from the Madrid Open last week and was seen attending the Laureus Awards in Madrid with his right wrist immobilised, raising further concerns about the severity of the injury.

He said the next medical evaluation would be decisive in shaping his immediate future on the tour and whether he can defend his French Open crown.

He explained that his team is doing everything possible to ensure recovery progresses smoothly, but emphasised the importance of patience during this critical rehabilitation phase.

The injury first surfaced during his recent campaign in Barcelona, where he required treatment on his wrist during a straight-sets victory over Otto Virtanen before later withdrawing from the tournament. Alcaraz admitted that the uncertainty has made the past few days challenging, but insisted he is trying to remain positive while waiting for further clarity on his condition.

He added that multiple tests will be conducted in the coming days, which will determine whether he can resume training and prepare for Roland Garros.

The French Open remains his most successful Grand Slam, and any extended absence would significantly impact his title defence and ranking momentum heading into the clay season.

Following Madrid, the next major tournament on the calendar is the Italian Open, where Alcaraz triumphed last year, but his participation there also now depends on recovery progress.

PGA Tour to skip Hawaii in 2027, ending 56-year tradition

HONOLULU

The PGA Tour will not stage a tournament in Hawaii in 2027, marking the first time in 56 years that the islands will be absent from the professional golf calendar as the tour moves toward a revamped early-season schedule.

The decision follows months of uncertainty surrounding the future of The Sentry at Kapalua on Maui, which was canceled earlier this year due to drought conditions and a long-running dispute over water management on the island.

The Plantation Course at Kapalua, long admired for its scenic ocean views and wide fairways, had hosted the PGA Tour's season opener since 1999, initially as a winners-only event before expanding under new sponsorship arrangements.

The PGA Tour confirmed the development after notifying staff involved at Kapalua, while expressing gratitude to the resort, Maui County, and the state of Hawaii for decades of support and partnership.

The Sony Open in Honolulu, traditionally played the week after Kapalua and held at Waialae Country Club since 1965, is also undergoing transition as its current sponsorship cycle concludes.

Organisers are reportedly exploring a potential move for the Sony Open into the PGA Tour Champions schedule, although no formal decision has been announced regarding its future placement.

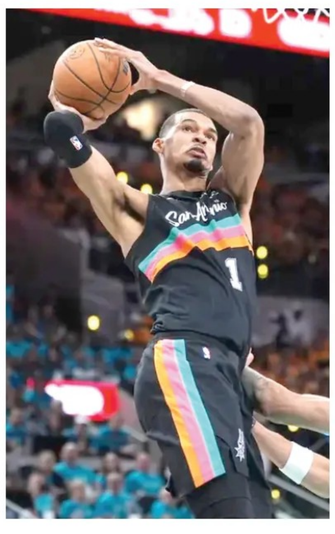
The removal of Hawaii from the 2027 calendar reflects broader structural changes within the PGA Tour, which is reassessing its season-opening sequence and global scheduling priorities.

Sentry Insurance, which has been the title sponsor at Kapalua since 2018, remains committed to its long-term partnership through 2035 despite the event's relocation uncertainty.

The most recent edition of The Sentry saw record-breaking scoring conditions, with Hideki Matsuyama winning at 35 under par in what turned out to be the final tournament at Kapalua for the foreseeable future.

The tournament has historically been expensive to stage due to logistical challenges, including transporting equipment to Maui, alongside relatively modest attendance figures compared to mainland events.

Wembanyama is unanimous selection as NBA defensive player of the year



SAN ANTONIO

Victor Wembanyama has become the first unanimous winner of the NBA Defensive Player of the Year award, completing a historic milestone after a dominant season anchoring the San Antonio Spurs' defence. At just 22 years old, the towering 7-foot-4 centre is also the youngest ever recipient of the award, adding another landmark achievement to his rapidly growing list of accolades.

Wembanyama led the league in blocked shots for a third consecutive season, consistently altering opposition game plans with his rim protection, timing, and ability to cover ground unlike any player in recent memory.

The Spurs star said the toughest challenge was meeting the 65-game eligibility requirement, but expressed pride at securing the honour and becoming the first unanimous DPOY winner in league history.

Oklahoma City's Chet Holmgren finished second in the voting, while Detroit's Ausar Thompson placed third, both earning recognition for their defensive impact during strong seasons for their respective teams.

Wembanyama's dominance was never seriously questioned throughout the campaign, as opponents repeatedly struggled to score inside against his length, anticipation, and defensive instincts.

Spurs forward Keldon Johnson praised his teammate, calling him the best defensive player in the world and highlighting his relentless work ethic and commitment to improvement.

QUICK READ

Bank credit growth hits 16% amid funding pressure

NEW DELHI

Bank lending in India grew sharply, reaching Rs 213.6 lakh crore by March 31, marking a 16.1% rise compared to last year, according to a report. Growth was driven by strong retail loans, MSME financing, and corporate borrowing. The credit–deposit ratio stayed high at 81.4%, showing banks are lending more than before. Total deposits also increased to Rs 262.3 lakh crore. Experts said demand for loans remains strong, especially in small businesses and consumer segments like vehicles and gold loans, supporting overall banking activity and economic growth.

Airtel boosts 5G network across Maharashtra, Goa

PUNE

Bharti Airtel has expanded its 5G network by adding over 3,400 new sites across Maharashtra and Goa. The rollout now covers more than 22 million users across 36 districts, including remote areas like Gadchiroli and Nandurbar. The company said the expansion will improve speed, connectivity, and digital services such as streaming, online learning, and payments. Airtel officials said growing data demand is driving continuous upgrades. The telecom firm is also investing in stronger coverage across rural and urban regions to support rising internet usage and better network reliability.

India says milk supply stable despite West Asia crisis

NEW DELHI

Milk supply, prices, and dairy operations across India remain stable despite the ongoing West Asia crisis, the government said. Officials confirmed there are no disruptions in procurement, processing, or distribution of milk and dairy products. Fuel supply for dairy plants has also been secured, with industries assured of 70% of their LPG needs, helping avoid shortages. Authorities said packaging materials are available and supply chains are running smoothly. The government continues to monitor the sector closely and coordinate with states to ensure farmers are paid on time and milk availability remains steady nationwide.

Apple successor to fast track India growth

Apple CEO Tim Cook's retirement marks a strategic shift, with successor John Ternus prioritizing India's $4 trillion expansion

NEW DELHI

As Apple CEO Tim Cook prepares to step down this September, all eyes are on his successor, John Ternus, to lead the tech giant's massive expansion in India.

Cook leaves behind a $4 trillion empire and a company that has successfully shifted much of its focus from China to Indian shores.

Under Cook's leadership, India transformed into a vital hub for Apple.

The country now assembles nearly one-quarter of all iPhones globally. Experts believe this momentum will only speed up under Ternus. While Cook was the visionary who opened flagship stores and connected with local developers, Ternus brings an engineering background that may appeal to India's young, tech-savvy population.

Industry analysts say India is playing a dual role for Apple, it is both a powerhouse for manufacturing and a rapidly growing market for buyers. "India is becoming the new China for Apple's supply chain," noted Prabhu Ram of CyberMedia Research. By moving production to India and Vietnam, Apple has successfully reduced its dependence on other regions amidst global political tensions.

In his farewell statement, Cook called his time at Apple the "greatest privilege" of his life. Since 2011, he grew the company's value from $350 billion to $4 trillion.

While Cook previously brushed off retirement rumors as "just talk," his departure marks the end of an era. Now, the mission falls to Ternus to turn India into the primary engine for Apple's next decade of global growth.

India's two-wheeler sales hit record 22 million units

NEW DELHI

India's two-wheeler industry has just made history. According to a new report, domestic sales hit an all-time high of 22 million units in the 2026 fiscal year.

This milestone marks a massive 11% jump in volume compared to the previous year, proving that the country's love for scooters and motorcycles is stronger than ever.

The year ended with a bang, as sales in March alone surged by nearly 29%. Experts credit this boom to several factors, tax reforms (GST), lower interest rates, and extra cash in the pockets of rural buyers. Whether people were looking for basic commuter bikes or high-end "aspirational" models, there was a bike for everyone. Electric vehicles (EVs) also stole the spotlight. Retail sales for electric two-wheelers jumped over 47% in March, as more riders made the switch to green energy.

By the end of the fiscal year, electric models accounted for nearly 10% of all monthly sales, a significant step toward a cleaner future on Indian roads. Looking ahead, the road might have a few bumps. Analysts predict growth will slow to about 3 - 5% next year due to a weak monsoon outlook and the "El Nino" weather pattern, which often hurts rural spending. Additionally, conflicts in the Middle East could pose risks to exports and parts supplies.

Still, with Indian brands gaining global fame and exports rising by 23%, the industry remains in a very strong position.

Shipyard revival generates 2K local jobs

MANGALURU

Coastal Karnataka's industrial scene received a massive boost as the revived Chowgule Shipyard officially returned to action. The facility, which was previously closed, has already created 2,000 new jobs in the region, signaling a major win for local employment and India's maritime goals.

The shipyard celebrated its comeback by exporting its first major vessel, the Frisian Future, to the Netherlands. This 8,500-ton ship is just the beginning, the company reportedly has a full pipeline of orders waiting to be built. Local leaders, including Captain Brijesh Chowta, highlighted that the facility has been transformed into a "very modern" hub capable of competing on a global stage.

This revival fits perfectly into the national "Amrit Kaal Maritime Vision 2047," a plan to make India a world leader in ship construction. Officials believe Mangaluru's skilled workers and coastal location make it the perfect place to build everything from massive cargo ships to luxury yachts.

Food schemes key driver of local growth, job creation

NEW DELHI

India's food processing sector is seeing a massive surge in growth thanks to a government initiative known as the PLISFPI scheme.

Officials announced that the program has already distributed ₹2,162 crore in incentives to businesses, helping the country become a global leader in food production.

The scheme has successfully expanded India's food preservation capacity by 34 lakh metric tonnes per year. Beyond just infrastructure, the impact on people is significant. So far, the project has created nearly 3.39 lakh jobs, easily beating the government's original target of 2.5 lakh. This surge in employment offers new opportunities for workers across 274 different project locations nationwide. Small businesses are also getting a major helping hand. Out of 165 approved applications, 69 belong to small and medium enterprises (MSMEs). These smaller shops are now better integrated into the global supply chain, allowing them to compete on a much larger scale. To encourage healthier eating, the government even set aside ₹800 crore specifically for companies making millet-based snacks and ready-to-eat meals.

India's PLISFPI scheme has distributed ₹2,162 crore in incentives, creating 3.39 lakh jobs and boosting food processing capacity to turn India into a global "food basket."

The results are showing up in international markets too. Processed food now makes up over 20% of India's total agricultural exports, a big jump from a decade ago. By encouraging local manufacturing and global branding, the government aims to turn India into a "food basket" for the world. With more investment pouring in, the sector is well on its way to hitting its production goal of over ₹33,000 crore by 2027.

Nations step in to ease energy price shock

LONDON

Governments across the world are rolling out measures to protect citizens from rising energy costs linked to the ongoing U.S - Israeli conflict with Iran, according to reports. Countries including United Kingdom, India, and South Korea are cutting taxes, boosting subsidies, and adjusting fuel and power policies to reduce household burden. India is increasing LPG production and managing exports, while South Korea is expanding nuclear and coal power use. Other nations are also tapping reserves, offering cash support, and controlling fuel prices. The global response highlights growing pressure on governments as energy markets remain unstable and prices stay high worldwide.

Advanced systems to cool AI data centers unveiled

SEOUL

LG Electronics is making a major play for the heart of the AI revolution.

The tech giant announced it is pivoting its cooling and energy business to focus on the massive power and heat demands of artificial intelligence data centers.

As AI chips get faster, they also get much hotter. To solve this, LG showcased a powerful "liquid cooling" system at a global tech event in Washington.

Unlike traditional fans, this "direct-to-chip" design flows coolant right over the processors to soak up heat instantly. These new units have a massive capacity of 1.4 megawatts, more than double what was previously possible, allowing them to handle the world's most intense computing tasks.

LG is even testing "immersion cooling," where entire servers are submerged in a special liquid that doesn't conduct electricity.

This method is considered the gold standard for energy efficiency in modern data centers.

The company isn't just stopping at temperature control, they want to manage the power, too.

By working with specialized partners, LG is developing a new electrical grid that reduces power waste. Currently, data centers lose about 25% of their electricity when converting it for use, LG aims to cut that loss down to just 15%.

This shift toward "end-to-end" solutions shows that LG plans to be much more than a home appliance brand, they want to be the backbone of the global AI infrastructure.

Adani group makes bold nuke power move

AHMEDABAD

The Adani Group is charging ahead into the world of nuclear power. Adani Power announced it has created a new company specifically dedicated to atomic energy, called Rawatbhata-Raj Atomic Energy Limited (RRAEL).

This is a major sign that one of India's biggest business giants is ready to help power the nation's future with nuclear energy.

The new company was officially set up with a starting capital of ₹5 lakh. It is part of a larger structure under Adani Power, designed to focus entirely on nuclear projects. Interestingly, Adani didn't stop there. Another branch of the group started a second nuclear-focused firm called Coastal-Maha Atomic Energy Limited. This sister company will handle everything from generating atomic power to sending it through the electrical grid.

These back-to-back moves come at a perfect time for India's energy goals. Right now, the country produces about 8.7 gigawatts of nuclear power. However, the government has set a massive target to hit 100 gigawatts by 2047. To reach that goal, India needs private companies to step up and build more plants alongside state-run projects.

By setting up these specialized units, the Adani Group is positioning itself to be a leader in India's "clean energy" roadmap.

As the country tries to move away from coal and reduce pollution, nuclear energy is becoming a key part of the plan. These new companies are the first blocks in what could become a massive network of atomic power plants across India.

Russia to halt Kazakhstan oil flow to Germany

MOSCOW

Russia is set to stop oil shipments from Kazakhstan to Germany through the Druzhba pipeline from May 1, according to industry sources.

The move could impact supply to Germany's major PCK refinery, which depends heavily on this route for fuel production.

Officials in Russia said they need to verify the reports, while no final confirmation has been issued.

The pipeline has faced repeated disruptions in recent years.

If halted, the decision may add pressure on Europe's energy security, already strained by ongoing geopolitical tensions and reduced Russian oil supplies since the Ukraine conflict.

AI FOR WELL-BEING

India tops global AI health adoption at 85%

MUMBAI

India has officially become the world leader in using artificial intelligence for health. A new report reveals that a massive 85% of Indian consumers are already using AI tools to manage their well-being, leaving countries like the US and UK far behind.

While the global average for AI health adoption sits at 60%, India's rate is nearly double that of Japan (34%) and significantly higher than the United Kingdom (43%) and the United States (50%). This rapid shift shows that Indians are increasingly comfortable using digital technology to stay healthy.

The study, which surveyed 13,000 people across 15 countries, found that younger people are leading the charge. About 78% of Gen Z and 71% of Millennials use AI for medical tasks.

Currently, most people use these tools through fitness wearables or chatbots to ask simple questions.

However, users are now looking for "smarter" AI that can actually book doctor appointments, manage prescriptions, and check for dangerous drug interactions.

Despite the tech boom, patients aren't ready to say goodbye to human doctors. Most people prefer a "hybrid" model where AI assists doctors with tricky tasks, like reading test results or tracking long-term illnesses, rather than replacing them entirely. As the technology grows, India's healthcare system is expected to become one of the most digitally advanced in the world.

Korean giants pump massive AI fund in India

NEW DELHI

Leading South Korean companies have announced a major investment fund worth $476.4 million to support fast-growing technology firms in India. The fund, called the Unicorn Growth Fund, was launched by Naver, Krafton, and Mirae Asset Group. The initiative will focus on sectors like artificial intelligence, fintech, and digital content. Officials from both countries attended the launch event held in New Delhi, highlighting growing business ties. The fund began earlier this year with an initial investment and is expected to grow further. Company leaders said India's strong talent pool and startup ecosystem make it an ideal place for such investments. In a related move, Naver signed an agreement with Tata Consultancy Services to explore opportunities in AI and digital services. This partnership aims to boost innovation and expand business in India. Experts believe these steps will strengthen India's position as a global technology hub.

Hayden slams GT after 99-run thrashing by MI in IPL

GT batting coach Matthew Hayden blasts team after heavy defeat MI match

AHMEDABAD

Gujarat Titans suffered a crushing 99-run defeat to Mumbai Indians in IPL 2026 at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad, a result that left batting coach Matthew Hayden seething over the team's overall performance. Mumbai Indians posted a commanding 199/5 after being put in to bat, largely driven by a blistering unbeaten century from Tilak Varma, who struck 101 off just 45 deliveries, dominating the death overs with aggressive stroke play.

Despite early breakthroughs from Gujarat, the final four overs proved disastrous as MI added 73 runs, exposing GT's bowling vulnerabilities. Hayden described the phase as unacceptable, pointing to repeated execution errors from senior bowlers who failed to control the scoring rate at the back end.

In response, Gujarat Titans collapsed dramatically in their chase, losing opener Sai Sudharsan for a golden duck and slipping to 45/3 inside the powerplay. The middle order offered little resistance as MI's bowlers, including Ashwani Kumar, Mitchell Santner, and AM Ghazanfar, dismantled the lineup with disciplined spells. GT were eventually bowled out for just 100, far short of the target.

Hayden did not hold back in his assessment, calling the batting display "a terrible performance" and stressing that the margin of defeat reflected poor decision-making and mindset issues. He emphasised that the team's top-order batters needed to spend more time at the crease and convert starts into meaningful contributions.

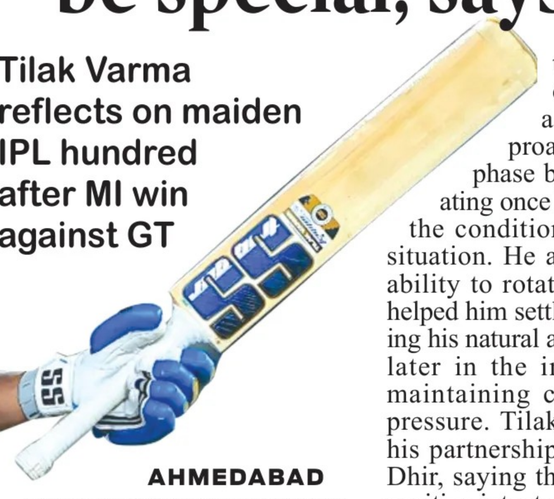
While critical of the batting unit, Hayden reserved praise for Kagiso Rabada, who stood out with figures of 3/33, maintaining pace and consistency even as others struggled.

However, he noted that individual brilliance could not mask collective failure.

IPL 2026

Maiden IPL century will always be special, says Tilak Varma

Tilak Varma reflects on maiden IPL hundred after MI win against GT



AHMEDABAD

Tilak Varma's maiden IPL century proved to be a defining moment in Mumbai Indians' dominant 99-run victory over Gujarat Titans in Ahmedabad, a performance that also earned him the Player of the Match award.

He said the first hundred of his IPL career will always remain special, especially coming in a high-pressure game where his team needed stability after early setbacks.

Tilak explained that he initially focused on spending time at the crease, taking a cautious approach in the first phase before accelerating once he understood the conditions and match situation. He added that his ability to rotate strike early helped him settle before playing his natural attacking game later in the innings while maintaining control under pressure. Tilak also praised his partnership with Naman Dhir, saying the youngster's positive intent allowed Mumbai Indians to maintain momentum during crucial middle overs despite early wickets falling.

He noted that while he has a range of attacking shots, the situation demanded discipline and smart shot selection, which he believes made the difference in converting his start into a big score.

Varma said staying calm under pressure was key, especially after recent games where he had limited time in the middle and needed to adapt quickly to match demands.

He further credited the team management for backing him in different batting roles throughout the season, which has helped him grow in confidence and responsibility.

Mumbai Indians posted 199 for 5, with Varma's unbeaten 101 off 45 balls anchoring the innings after early wickets, before the bowlers bundled Gujarat Titans out for 100. He said such dominant wins help the team regain momentum in the tournament as they aim to climb the points table after a mixed start to IPL 2026 season.

Tilak concluded that personal milestones matter less than team success, adding that consistency and adaptability will be crucial in upcoming matches as Mumbai Indians look to strengthen their position in the league standings and push for qualification in the IPL 2026 playoffs. He also thanked fans for their support throughout the season so far and continues to motivate him further.

Hardik Pandya refuses to be blamed for Bumrah's wicket drought

AHMEDABAD

Hardik Pandya firmly defended Jasprit Bumrah after Mumbai Indians victory over Gujarat Titans in IPL 2026 at Ahmedabad saying criticism over the pacer's wicket drought was unfair.

Bumrah who had gone wicketless in first five matches of the season made a stunning return by striking on the very first ball of Gujarat's innings dismissing Sai Sudharsan and shifting momentum instantly.

He ended with impressive figures of 3 for 15 in three overs playing a key role in Mumbai's 99 run win after posting 199 for 5.

Pandya rejected suggestions that his captaincy or bowling management had affected Bumrah's early wicket tally saying the team uses him strategically based on match situations.

He said people often question why Bumrah does not bowl the first over more frequently but insisted it is about tactical flexibility rather than any issue.

Pandya highlighted that Bumrah has featured in over 150 IPL matches and has bowled the first over only a handful of times reinforcing that workload and matchups dictate usage.

According to him Bumrah remains Mumbai's most valuable weapon and is deployed in phases where impact is maximised rather than being restricted to opening spells.

Mumbai Indians posted 199 for 5 thanks to Tilak Varma's unbeaten 101 off 45 balls while Naman Dhir contributed 45 runs to stabilise the innings. The bowling unit then delivered a collective effort with Ashwani Kumar taking 4 for 24 and Mitchell Santner and Allah Ghazanfar picking two wickets each.

Pandya concluded that the win was crucial for Mumbai after a poor run of four consecutive defeats and praised the team's intensity and execution under pressure in Ahmedabad.

Looking ahead Pandya said Mumbai Indians will focus on maintaining consistency as they prepare for their upcoming clash against Chennai Super Kings highlighting that Bumrah's rhythm returning at the right time is a massive boost for the bowling attack and that the team management remains confident in its tactical plans regarding bowler rotation and workload management while ensuring Bumrah is used in high impact phases rather than fixed overs which Pandya believes maximises match winning value.

Sunrisers Hyderabad (242/2) beat Delhi Capitals (195/9) by 47 runs in IPL 2026 clash at the Rajiv Gandhi International Stadium in Hyderabad on Tuesday.

SHUBMAN GILL FINDS FAULT WITH BOWLERS AGAINST MI

AHMEDABAD

Despite Gujarat Titans being bundled out for 100 while chasing 200 against Mumbai Indians in IPL 2026, skipper Shubman Gill chose to focus his post-match criticism on the bowling unit, highlighting what he believed were costly lapses in the middle overs that allowed MI to post a match-winning total of 199/5 at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad.

Tilak Varma's blistering unbeaten 101 off 45 balls proved decisive as Mumbai Indians recovered strongly after early setbacks, capitalising on Gujarat's inability to maintain control in the latter stages of the innings.

Although Kagiso Rabada picked up three wickets in the powerplay, Gujarat failed to sustain pressure through the middle phase.

Gill admitted that on a slightly sluggish pitch, his side had targeted a par score of around 160–170 but fell short in execution.

He stressed that inconsistent lengths and missed plans in the middle overs allowed Mumbai to shift momentum decisively in their favour.

The GT captain said the defeat should be viewed as a learning opportunity, especially with the tournament entering a crucial phase.

He acknowledged that while conditions were challenging, the bowling group failed to adapt consistently to the surface.

Gujarat's margin of defeat—99 runs—marked their heaviest loss in IPL history, underlining the scale of the collapse despite MI themselves putting up a recoverable start early in the innings.

Gill further pointed out that slight dew in the second innings may have marginally eased batting conditions, but insisted the pitch behaviour remained largely similar throughout the match.

In reply, Gujarat's chase never gained momentum as they collapsed early, losing key wickets inside the powerplay and eventually folding for 100.

MI's bowlers maintained discipline throughout, ensuring no resistance from the middle and lower order.

With this result, Gujarat Titans slipped to sixth place in the standings, while Mumbai Indians moved up with a much-needed win.

CSK lose their top-scoring batter Ayush Mhatre for remaining season

CHENNAI

Chennai Super Kings have suffered a major setback in IPL 2026 after confirmation that their explosive young opener Ayush Mhatre has been ruled out for the remainder of the season due to a left hamstring injury sustained on April 18 against Sunrisers Hyderabad.

CSK confirmed that the 18-year-old will require a rehabilitation period of six to 12 weeks, effectively ending his campaign. Mhatre had been one of the standout performers for CSK this season, scoring 201 runs in six matches at a strike rate of 177.88 with two half-centuries. His absence leaves CSK without their most consistent top-order aggressor, putting pressure on the management to find an immediate replacement ahead of crucial matches. The franchise is reportedly considering options such as Urvil Patel, Kartik Sharma, and several uncapped domestic players to fill the void in the top order.

Patel, known for his explosive hitting and record-breaking 28-ball T20 century, is seen as the closest like-for-like replacement within the squad structure. CSK will also explore external options from the unsold players pool if internal replacements do not deliver the required impact in upcoming fixtures. The team management has

acknowledged that Mhatre's absence is a significant blow but remains optimistic about the depth available in the squad. With CSK already facing pressure in the points table, the loss of their top scorer adds further urgency to their campaign turnaround efforts. Mhatre is expected to undergo rehabilitation for up to three months, with medical staff prioritising a full recovery ahead of future domestic commitments.

CSK concluded by wishing the young batter a speedy recovery, expressing confidence that he will return stronger in upcoming seasons of the IPL. Despite the setback, CSK are expected to continue rotating their top-order options as they aim to stabilise their campaign in the coming matches.

PCB in talks to build stadium in Saudi Arabia

LAHORE

The Pakistan Cricket Board is in advanced discussions with the Saudi Arabia Cricket Federation to construct a new cricket stadium in Jeddah, a move that has already received approval from the PCB Governing Board.

According to PCB sources, chairman Mohsin Naqvi is personally leading negotiations with Saudi officials, and an expression of interest for the project has already been submitted as discussions move forward.

The proposed stadium in Jeddah is expected to feature modern facilities including floodlights, high-quality pitches, and seating capacity suitable for international matches and Pakistan Super League fixtures.

Officials believe the project could significantly boost cricket development in Saudi Arabia, where interest in the sport has grown rapidly due to a large South Asian expatriate population.

Saudi cricket authorities had earlier approached the PCB with the idea, reflecting the kingdom's ambition to expand its sporting profile and possibly launch its own domestic T20 league.

PCB officials have expressed willingness to support the initiative, citing strong bilateral relations and the opportunity to strengthen cricket ties between the two nations.

Sources also highlighted the presence of a large Pakistani and South Asian community in Saudi Arabia as a key factor driving the proposal forward.

If finalised, the stadium could also host Pakistan Super League matches outside the UAE, marking a major step in the tournament's international expansion strategy.

At present, the UAE remains the principal hub for international cricket in the Middle East, hosting Tests, ODIs, T20 leagues and ICC events, but PCB's proposed venture with Saudi Arabia signals a potential shift in regional cricket dynamics.

Between 2010 and 2019, the UAE also served as Pakistan's home venue for international cricket due to security concerns, and the PSL itself was launched in Dubai in 2016 before later expanding to Pakistan.

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